PATTERNS OF POWER

British Southern Rhodesia

The Complete Study

1890 — 1965 — 1980

Thomas J. Bryan
with Claude (Anthropic)

Held as tested, not revealed.

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PREFACE AND OUTLINE

Front matter · how this study was made, the disciplines it holds itself to, and a map of its fourteen parts

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The collaboration

This is a case study in the *Patterns of Power* series, applying the series' framework to British Southern Rhodesia, from the concession obtained at Bulawayo in 1888 and the occupation of 1890 to the settler rebellion of 1965 and the transfer of power in 1980. The framework is a lens for reading how any order of power is founded, dressed, and held: the floor of force beneath every order, the robe of doctrine laid over the floor to make the force cheap, the settlement that divides the spoils, the cost column in which each subject prices defection, the seam that manages the belief on which the whole depends, the default by which an elite coordinates without instruction, and — running through all of it — position logic, the proposition that rulers in like positions converge on like solutions because a position poses a problem with only a few good answers.

Southern Rhodesia was chosen because it isolates a variable the series had been carrying without naming. The other studies turn on what the conqueror found: a seizable throne in Northern Nigeria, no throne at all in Kenya, a destroyed one in Iraq. This case turns on something that comes before that question — what the conqueror came *for*. A conqueror who wants the surplus produced on the ground needs the people who produce it, must leave them in place, and must form a stratum of them to run the machinery. A conqueror who wants the ground itself needs none of that, because his own children will hold the posts. Everything that makes Southern Rhodesia unlike the rest of the collection follows from that single fork: an extraction that ran sideways to the settler rather than outward to the metropole; a native administrative class refused in writing; a coercive apparatus that could never be reduced because it was the labour supply rather than the guard on it; a substantial and genuine liberty for the people inside the arrangement; and a collapse that ran through the settlers rather than around them.

The study was built the way the series is built, one module at a time. The author brought the framework, the direction, and the judgement of the whole, and held the collaboration to its disciplines; Claude, Anthropic's model, did the research — verifying every load-bearing quotation, date, and figure by web search against a source reproducing the primary text before any module was written — and produced the drafts, applying the framework module by module, each presented and confirmed before the next was begun. The framework's concepts are the series'; the Rhodesian application, and the refinements it yielded, are the work of the collaboration.

Its engine throughout is the method of information asymmetry. The study exists to show the gap between what was said at the metropole and what was done in the colony, and it works by setting the exact public words beside the exact words of the ground — the charter's pledge to improve the condition of the natives beside the enlistment terms that paid the conquerors in their cattle; the Declaration of Rights beside the clause exempting every existing law from it; thirty-one million acres beside forty-five thousand. It lays out the arithmetic and leaves the sum to the reader. It does not preach the conclusion.

The disciplines

Five rules govern every module.

Quotation. Public-domain primary sources — charters, statutes, concessions, parliamentary debates, official reports, memoirs, monumental inscriptions — are quoted exactly, at the length the argument needs, because in a legal fiction the precise wording *is* the evidence. Modern copyrighted scholarship is paraphrased, briefly, and credited.

No fabrication. No quotation, date, attribution, or figure is ever invented or reconstructed from memory. What cannot be verified is dropped or flagged, never guessed; contested figures are given as ranges, and this case has more of them than most — the dead of 1896, the dead of the bush war, and the dead of the Matabeleland campaign of the 1980s are all given as spans rather than numbers.

Gravity without partisanship. Suffering is held with gravity, and the study refuses both flattery and demonisation — it names the legal fiction as fiction and explains the order's logic without excusing it. Its recurring watchword is *legibility is not pardon*: to understand how a thing was done is not to forgive its being done.

Contribution. Every module returns a refinement to the framework, stated plainly in its closing section, rather than merely applying the framework to the case.

Held as tested, not revealed. The pattern is treated as something discovered and tested against the evidence, not handed down as doctrine — a lens laid over the record, a tendency and never a law.

What Southern Rhodesia added to the framework

Because this is the collection's fullest settler case, it was able to name features that the labour and administrative colonies obscure. Chief among the refinements the study contributed: that the menu of options open to a conqueror is *gated by an earlier question* — not what apex he found but what he came for, because where the object is ground the cheap options are foreclosed regardless of what apex is available; that a conqueror who cannot afford his army becomes *more* violent rather than less, converting a salaried force into an unsalaried one by paying men in the property of people not yet conquered, and thereby making total dispossession the only way the wage bill can be discharged; that the most durable settlement fiction is not a claim of racial right but a claim of *universal* right, an open door with a priced threshold, which sorts for free and converts the exclusion into the excluded man's own choice; that the diagnostic instrument for a hollow constitution is the *savings clause* rather than the schedule of liberties; that the metropolitan seam is held not by concealment but by *sequence*, so that a formal safeguard will be invoked, examined and declined in writing; that whether a native administrative elite is formed is a question of *whether settlers need the jobs*, and that withholding formation is only half the mechanism, the other half being the statute that removes the destination; that coercion in a land colony is a *funnel rather than a wall* and therefore can never be relaxed; that the ruled absorb very large costs indefinitely provided one *residual* is untouched, and that the danger point is its removal rather than the absolute burden; that extraction in a settler colony runs *sideways* rather than outward and works most efficiently through a marketing board rather than a tax; that a censorship apparatus is a live readout of *which population's consent the order currently runs on*, and shifts within weeks when the dependency shifts; that elite alignment is not agreement but the *coincidence of separate self-defences*, whose signature is that leaders are removed in one direction only; that liberty is the *residue* those quarrels leave, and is therefore surrendered by its own owners when the quarrels stop; that the fracture which ends an order *need not occur in that order*, since Rhodesia's position was decided by a coup in Lisbon; and that a settler conquest does not call in a

metabolic debt but *writes* one, by fixing a boundary around a system whose entire safety margin was space.

The arc

A landscape opening and twelve modules, each with a framework function and its own evocative title.

Landscape — the two societies on the eve of conquest. **If We Had Retained America.** A highveld carrying three conquests stacked at three degrees of setting, and against it an England that had been learning since the Statutes of Kilkenny in 1366 how to plant its own people on other people's ground and stop them dissolving into it — with the loss of America as the wound the whole enterprise was designed to repair.

1 — The Floor of Force. **The Most Ruinous Item.** A company that found its police the largest item on its books, disbanded them, and paid its soldiers instead in the farms and cattle of a kingdom not yet conquered: the floor as a line in the accounts, and the arithmetic that made an underfunded conqueror the more thorough one.

2 — The Settlement. **Thirty-One Million and Forty-Five Thousand.** The reserves, the land companies, the Privy Council's finding that whoever owned the unalienated lands the natives did not, and the clause admitting any native to buy on the same terms as anyone else: the fiction of the open door, and the year it was repealed.

3 — The Robe. **Not Exactly the Queen's Words.** The oral promises left out of the concession, the Queen's name lent and then adjusted, and a House of Commons told the whole truth in November 1893 while the columns were still in the field: the robe cut for London and for the settler, and never for the conquered.

4 — Formation. **Raising the Mass Ever So Little.** A policy of advancing nobody, stated in a sentence in 1920, and a statute of 1934 defining an African out of the word *employee*: formation withheld because settlers needed the posts, and a counter-elite manufactured abroad in consequence.

5 — The Cost Column. **Gamblers, Loafers and Thieves.** Tax, pass, masters-and-servants, compound and vagrancy law assembled into a funnel rather than a wall, sixteen thousand convictions a year for paper offences — and the single increase, in 1951, that took the last residual and inverted the arithmetic across a countryside.

6 — Extraction. **Buying Back Their Own Grain.** A chartered company that never paid a dividend while it governed, a two-price maize market and a one-sided cattle levy:

extraction that ran to the settler rather than to London, through a marketing board rather than a tax.

7 — Information and Suppression. **Alarm, Fear, or Despondency.** Seventy-five years in which a purpose-built imperial safeguard was invoked, examined and declined in writing — and the month in October 1965 when the censor arrived, a month before the rebellion, to protect the settler from his own newspaper.

8 — Elite Coordination and the Default. **Then It's the Donkey.** Factions who fought each other over the Company, the Union, labour and land, and who removed three Prime Ministers in six years, every one of them for being marginally more accommodating than the last: alignment as convergent self-defence, and a ratchet that turns one way.

9 — Plurality or Foreclosure. **The Provisions of Any Existing Law.** A genuine settler liberty built out of seventy years of quarrelling, a Declaration of Rights modelled on the United Nations instruments with every existing statute exempted from it, and the four years in which the settlers dismantled their own freedoms once they stopped disagreeing.

10 — Change and Collapse. **Every Escape Route.** The metropole reprices, the junior elite fractures, a coup in Lisbon transforms the geography, a patron in Pretoria withdraws, and a war supplies the pressure but not the decision: the sequence by which an order of this kind ends, and the place in it where the man paying the hut tax appears.

11 — The Grim Accounting. **The Land Did Not Grow.** A conquest that inherited no metabolic debt because the order it took was extensive and mobile, and manufactured one over sixty years by fixing a boundary — then cited the result as evidence that Africans could not farm, and prescribed the cure that ended it.

12 — Convergence and Divergence. **The Same Statute Book.** Southern Rhodesia placed among the conquests that want the ground rather than the surplus; and the strongest case for the defence, stated in full in its own voice and set beside the arithmetic, including the twenty-two years for which the successor state kept the statute that had made a Chief Justice resign.

A note on sources. This front matter is descriptive and makes no primary-source claims of its own; every factual assertion about the case is established, with its sources and with its limits marked, in the module it summarises. The framework it describes is the series';

the disciplines it lists are the ones the modules hold themselves to and document in their own closing notes. *Part of the collection* Patterns of Power. *Tested, never revealed.*

IF WE HAD RETAINED AMERICA

Landscape · the two societies on the eve — a highveld carrying three conquests stacked one on another, the newest of them two generations old, and a Cape-and-London world that had been learning since 1366 how to put its own people on other people's ground and keep them its own

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Two shores, neither of them innocent

There is a way of telling what happened north of the Limpopo after 1890 that makes it a peculiar event: a freebooting company, a swindled king, a stolen country, an aberration in the record of a nation that mostly ruled by treaty and district officer. That telling is comfortable and it is wrong, and the reason it is wrong is the reason this landscape has to run long before it runs deep. Nothing about the enterprise was new. Moving your own people onto ground held by others, granting them that ground in fee, and then legislating to keep them from merging into the population they had displaced is among the oldest continuous practices of the European state; the English had been doing it, and writing statutes about it, for five hundred years before anyone crossed the Limpopo, and the men who chartered the crossing knew the history perfectly well. Not one of the instruments used after 1889 — the joint-stock company holding a royal charter, the promise of farms to men who would carry a rifle, the law forbidding the settler to dissolve into the native population, the settler assembly claiming the liberties of England as a birthright carried in the blood — was invented for Africa. Every one of them was already old, and most of them were English.

The other shore has the same problem and it is worth stating with the same bluntness. The country the Company entered was not a timeless African baseline waiting to be broken. It was a landscape of conquests laid one over another, some of them so old and so thoroughly settled that they had become simply the shape of the world, one of them

so recent that men alive in 1888 could remember its arrival. What the incomers met was not innocence. It was other people's history, at various stages of setting.

So the two shores of this study are not Europe and Africa. They are two long records of the same activity, meeting at a moment when one of them had steamships and Maxim guns and the other did not. What follows sets them out — the metropolitan one first, because it is the one modern readers think they know.

What England learned in Ireland

On 18 February 1366 a parliament opened at Kilkenny, summoned by Lionel of Antwerp, Duke of Clarence and third surviving son of Edward III, who had been sent to Ireland five years earlier to recover his wife's Ulster inheritance and shore up an English lordship that was visibly coming apart. It passed some thirty-five acts. They were written in the legal French of the day, and the preamble states the problem with a clarity that no later colonial statute improved upon:

> *ore plusors Engleis de la dit terre guepissant la lang... leys & usages Engleis vivent et se governement as maniers guise et lang des Irrois enemies et auxiant ount fait divers mariages & aliaunces enter eux et les Irrois enemyes avauntditz dont le dit terre et le lieg people de icelle la lang Engloies ligeance a nostre seignour le Roy... et lez leis Engleis illoeques sont mis en subjection et retrets*

— now many English of the said land, forsaking the English language, manners, mode of riding, laws and usages, live and govern themselves according to the manners, fashion, and language of the Irish enemies; and have made divers marriages and alliances between themselves and the Irish enemies aforesaid; whereby the said land, and its liege people, the English language, the allegiance due to our lord the king, and the English laws there, are put in subjection and decayed.

Read what that document is worried about. Not rebellion. Not the Irish. The Irish are a given, an "enemy" with whom war is assumed and about whom nothing much need be said. The thing that keeps the parliament of Kilkenny awake is that *the settlers are disappearing* — marrying in, fostering their children out, taking Irish names, riding without saddles, pleading in the Brehon courts, listening to Irish poets, becoming, in the phrase the fourteenth century itself reached for, a middle nation that was neither one thing nor the other. Nearly two centuries after the first Anglo-Norman landings, the writ ran barely beyond a handful of counties, and inside those counties the men

who were supposed to hold them for the king were turning into the people they had been sent to hold down.

The remedy was a law of separation, and the sweep of it is worth setting out because every element recurs six centuries later on another continent. Alliance with the Irish by marriage, by fostering of children, by godparenthood or by concubinage was made high treason. Submitting to Brehon law was treason. An Englishman taking an Irish name, or using the Irish language, apparel or customs, forfeited his lands. Trade and grazing across the line were restricted; Irish minstrels and storytellers were kept out of English districts on the express ground that they came to spy; the churches were separated, no Irishman to be admitted to a cathedral or collegiate house among the English. And the pastimes were legislated too — hurling out, archery in — so that the settler should keep the military habits that made him useful.

Two things follow, and the second is the one that matters most for what happens on the highveld.

The first is that the whole apparatus of legislated racial separation, which the twentieth century thinks of as the signature of the settler colony, was invented long before there was a race theory to justify it, and invented for a purpose that had nothing to do with the dignity or capacity of the conquered. It was a device for stopping a garrison from dissolving. The statutes of Kilkenny do not argue that the Irish are incapable; they argue that contact with them costs the king his men. When a Rhodesian legislature five and a half centuries later writes a statute partitioning land by race, or criminalising a sexual relationship across the line, the ancestry of that statute runs back through the Tudor plantations to this parliament, and its deepest function is the same one: it is aimed at the settler at least as much as at the native. A conqueror who wants his people to remain *his* has to prevent them from going native, and the cheapest way to prevent it is to make going native illegal.

The second is that the statutes did not work. They were renewed under Henry VII, which tells you all you need to know about their efficacy; the Anglo-Irish went on speaking Irish. That failure is itself instructive, because it establishes the problem to which the plantations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were the answer. If you cannot stop a thin settler stratum from being absorbed, you send more settlers — enough of them to constitute a society rather than a garrison, with their own farms, their own church, their own towns, and no need to marry outward.

The instrument: a company, a charter, and the rights of Englishmen

Which is where the two English colonial projects that matter for Rhodesia begin, and they begin at the same moment, in the same city, funded by the same people.

In April 1606 James I granted the first charter of Virginia. In May 1607 the first colonists landed at Jamestown. In 1609 the Ulster plantation went forward on lands escheated to the Crown after the flight of the Ulster earls, and in the same year Sir Thomas Phillips came to London to press the livery companies to put money into it; by 1610 a body of aldermen, merchants and company representatives had been constituted — the Irish Society, a joint-stock undertaking of exactly the kind then being used for Virginia and for the Indies. The London companies did not want the Ulster business and were bullied into it, several of them fined and imprisoned before they subscribed; they took County Coleraine and rebuilt Derry with a London prefix. Meanwhile the Virginia enterprise was reorganised in 1609 as a joint stock with fifty-six of the livery companies and several hundred individual merchants on the register. Land was allotted in graded portions to three classes of grantee — undertakers, who were investors bound to import settlers; servitors, meaning veterans of the Irish wars who lacked the capital and were carried by the companies; and a residue of "deserving" natives.

Hold that structure in view, because it is the structure of 1889 almost item for item. A Crown that wants territory and does not want to pay for it. A chartered joint-stock company that will pay for it against a promise of return. Investors who have to be talked or squeezed into subscribing. Soldiers rewarded in land instead of money. Settlers imported as a condition of the grant. And a residue of the conquered left holding whatever the arrangement does not want.

But the Virginia charter contains one clause that matters more than all the rest for what happens on the highveld three centuries later, and it must be quoted exactly:

> ...that all and every the Persons being our Subjects, which shall dwell and inhabit within every or any of the said several Colonies and Plantations, and every of their children, which shall happen to be born within any of the Limits and Precincts of the said several Colonies and Plantations, shall HAVE and enjoy all Liberties, Franchises, and Immunities, within any of our other Dominions, to all Intents and Purposes, as if they had been abiding and born, within this our Realm of England, or any other of our said Dominions.

That is the seed of everything. The settler is not a colonist in the sense of a subject of a foreign administration. He is an Englishman who has moved, and his children born abroad are Englishmen, and the liberties of England travel with him as personal property. He does not receive rights from the colony; he brings them, and holds them against anyone — including, in the end, against England.

The consequence was drawn out loud in Williamsburg in May 1765, when Patrick Henry's resolves against the Stamp Act put the case in the plainest available form: that the first settlers of Virginia had *brought with them and transmitted to their posterity* all the liberties and immunities enjoyed by the people of Great Britain, and that by the royal charters they were declared entitled to those liberties *as if they had been abiding and born within the realm of England*. Eleven years later a body of colonial gentlemen dissolved the connection with the mother country, and did it not as a foreign people demanding national independence but as Englishmen asserting rights the Crown's own charters had granted their great-grandfathers. It is worth being precise about who did this. Not the tenant farmer, not the indentured servant, and certainly not the slave, whose position the revolution left exactly where it found it. It was done by the men who already held land, office, militia rank and seats in the colonial assemblies — the settler elite, splitting from the metropolitan elite over who should decide, and carrying everyone below them along as weight.

That is the template. When, in another century and another hemisphere, the descendants of a chartered company's pioneers face a British government proposing to reprice their arrangement, they will reach for the same words, in nearly the same order, and they will mean them.

And it was never only English

It would be a mistake — and a flattering one — to treat this as an English peculiarity, because the flattery cuts both ways: it lets the English case be read as uniquely wicked, and it lets everyone else off.

Between roughly 1100 and 1350 the German-speaking world moved its eastern edge several hundred miles beyond the Elbe and the Saale, into lands held by Slavic, Baltic and Finnic peoples. In some regions — Brandenburg, and above all the Baltic coast under the Teutonic Order — this followed conquest and forced baptism; in others, Slav princes invited the settlers in for the rents and tithes. Villages were founded by the thousand under charters of German town law, and the noble families planted on the resulting estates east of the river became, in time, the Prussian squirearchy: *Junker*, from

Juncherre, the young lord. The class that would supply the officer corps of Prussia and then of Germany, and that stood for the better part of two centuries as the hardest obstacle to liberal politics in central Europe, held its land by right of a medieval settlement scheme on somebody else's ground. It had simply been there long enough that the origin had stopped being visible, which is the ordinary fate of a settlement that takes.

And the case that every educated Englishman of the 1880s had watched with his own eyes was the American one. This is the point at which the ordinary account of Victorian imperialism goes soft, because it prefers to imagine a public that did not know. The public may not have known. The men who wrote the books knew exactly, and said so in print, and were applauded for it.

In 1868 Charles Wentworth Dilke — twenty-five years old, Cambridge, about to enter Parliament as a Radical Liberal, a future champion of the trade unions and of votes for women — published *Greater Britain*, an account of two years spent following, as he put it, England round the world. It was an immediate success and it shaped a generation of imperial thinking. Writing of Colorado, having just conceded that the settler bore some blame for having failed to teach the Indian to be something better, Dilke arrives at his conclusion:

> After all, if the Indian is mentally, morally, and physically inferior to the white man, it is in every way for the advantage of the world that the next generation that inhabits Colorado should consist of whites instead of reds. That this result should not be brought about by cruelty or fraud upon the now existing Indians is all that we need require. The gradual extinction of the inferior races is not only a law of nature, but a blessing to mankind.

And then, in the next breath, without apparent discomfort, the fact that undoes the sentence he has just written: *The Indian question is not likely to be one much longer: before I reached England again, I learnt that the Coloradan capital had offered "twenty dollars a piece for Indian scalps with the ears on."*

The two sentences sit side by side on the page. The law of nature is affirmed; the bounty on ears is reported as evidence for it. This is a young radical, not a reactionary, and he closes the book by summing up what his travels have taught him: that in America he has seen the struggle of the dear races against the cheap, in Australia the cheaper races excluded from the soil not by distance but by deliberate legislation, and that on the whole *the dearer are likely to destroy the cheaper peoples, and that Saxondom will rise triumphant from the doubtful struggle.*

Nobody who had read Dilke — and the political class had read Dilke — could later claim not to have understood what a settler colony was for or what it did. The doctrine was not hidden. It was the ordinary furniture of educated liberal opinion, printed by Macmillan, and the men who chartered the crossing of the Limpopo had grown up inside it. What was fed to the ordinary emigrant, and to the ordinary reader of the illustrated papers — the vanishing native, the empty land, the bringing of civilisation — was not a lie told by cynics to fools. It was the same belief, held at a different depth, by people who would never have to see a bounty notice. This is worth saying carefully, because the argument that follows depends on it: a settler who believes he is entering an empty country and improving it is not a hypocrite. He has been formed, thoroughly and successfully, and he will act on the formation with a clear conscience for four generations. The men at the top who commissioned the formation held it with the grain of salt of people who have read the ledgers.

The man is a position

Cecil John Rhodes was the fifth son of a Hertfordshire vicar, sent out to Natal at seventeen for his lungs, and on the Kimberley diamond fields by 1871. It is customary to begin the Rhodesian story with him and to make it a study in personal will. That is a mistake, and the surest evidence that it is a mistake is the document he wrote at Oxford on 2 June 1877, at twenty-four, and amended later that year at Kimberley — the so-called Confession of Faith, which reads less like an ambition than like a man reciting the assumptions of his class back to himself. It opens by asking what the chief good in life is, decides that it is to be useful to one's country, and then locates the country's problem:

> …that at the present day we are actually limiting our children and perhaps bringing into the world half the human beings we might owing to the lack of country for them to inhabit that if we had retained America there would at this moment be millions more of English living.
>
> I contend that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race… It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we should keep this one idea steadily before our eyes that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race more of the best the most human, most honourable race the world possesses.

The wound is America. Not the Indies, not India — America, the settler colony that was lost. The remedy proposed is a secret society for the extension of the Empire and, in

terms, *for the recovery of the United States*. Whatever else this is, it is not the invention of a new idea. It is a young man in 1877 grieving a break that had happened a century before, and resolving to acquire enough new ground that it need not happen again. The irony that will take eighty-eight years to mature is that the ground he acquired broke away for precisely the reasons America had, invoking the same charter clause.

By 1888 the position had filled out. Rhodes and Charles Rudd had spent the eighties consolidating the Kimberley mines; in March 1888 the amalgamation with Barney Barnato produced De Beers Consolidated Mines, which within about a year held something on the order of nine-tenths of world diamond production, and whose trust deed — this is the detail that matters — was drawn so widely that the company was empowered to acquire territory and to govern it. A diamond firm's articles of association authorised it to annex. Gold had been struck on the Witwatersrand in 1886, in the Transvaal, under a Boer republic that Rhodes did not control and in which he had bought badly. He sat in the Cape parliament and had already helped push London into taking Bechuanaland in 1885 to keep a road north open against the Transvaal and the Germans, who had proclaimed a protectorate over South West Africa in 1884. The Portuguese were pressing their claim to a band across the continent from Angola to Mozambique. Belgian and German and Portuguese agents were in the field, and under the doctrine settled at Berlin in 1884–85 a claim needed occupation to hold.

So: a fortune that has run out of room in one industry and arrived too late in another; a rival republic to the north-east and rival empires east and west; a metropolitan government that wants the interior denied to others but will not pay to hold it; and a body of doctrine, published and respectable, according to which putting Englishmen on ground is the highest available public service. Any man standing at that intersection in 1888 would have been looking north. Rhodes was the one standing there.

By then the wagons of concession-hunters were already outspanned outside the royal town at Bulawayo, and had been for years, each of them carrying a paper for the king to mark.

The highveld: an old conquest that had come apart

The king they were waiting on ruled the newest of the country's political orders, and to see what that meant one has to go a long way back.

Between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries, ancestors of the Shona built in dry stone on the southern plateau, at a scale that had no rival in sub-Saharan Africa: at Great Zimbabwe, walls without mortar rising to some ten metres, enclosures spread

over roughly seven hundred hectares, a settlement that may at its height have held on the order of ten to twenty thousand people, living on cattle, on grain, and on the gold and ivory that moved down to the Swahili coast. From the decline of that centre, a state we know as Mutapa rose in the north from around the 1430s, and traded and quarrelled with the Portuguese on the Zambezi for two centuries; from a revolt within it, Changamire Dombo built the Rozvi power in the 1680s, beat a combined Mutapa–Portuguese force at Maungwe in 1684, destroyed the Portuguese trading post at Dambarare in 1693, and drove the Mutapa rulers off the plateau by 1702. Under the Rozvi the smaller chieftaincies across a wide territory kept their own affairs and acknowledged the Changamire in matters of succession and in the handling of foreign traders.

Each of these was a conquest. Each became, in its time, simply the way the country was arranged, which is what conquests do when they take. And then the Rozvi power broke in its turn: from about 1826 Nguni war-bands displaced by the upheavals south of the Limpopo came through the plateau, and by the late 1830s the Rozvi ruling house was scattered and its stone towns going to grass.

What that left, over most of the eastern and central plateau, was a countryside of Shona chieftaincies — dozens of them, related, quarrelsome, farming and herding and working iron and gold, holding their land through lineage and ancestor, with no paramount above them and no capital worth marching on. This is a fact of the first importance and it is easy to read as absence. It was not absence; it was a different arrangement, one whose coordination ran through kinship and shrine rather than through a throne. But for a stranger arriving with a document to be signed, it meant something very specific: there was nobody to sign. No treasury to seize, no army to enlist, no tax roll to inherit, no single man whose word would deliver a country. Whatever the incomers wanted from this ground, they would have to build the machinery to get it, or take the ground directly.

And the incomers had already decided in advance what they thought of the people who lived on it. When the German prospector Karl Mauch reached Great Zimbabwe in September 1871, hunting the biblical Ophir, he cut a chip from a lintel, thought it smelled like his pencil, concluded that it was Lebanese cedar, and therefore that Phoenicians had brought it, and therefore that the great elliptical enclosure was a copy of the Queen of Sheba's palace at Jerusalem. Local traders had assured him beforehand that the ruins could never have been built by blacks. The story went round Europe and became, in the settler community that followed, an article of faith so pervasive that a later excavator — Theodore Bent, who dug there in 1891 at Rhodes's expense and duly

concluded for a Semitic origin — complained that the names of Solomon and Sheba were on everybody's lips. The country was being pre-emptied of its builders before a single farm was pegged. That, too, is part of the landscape: not only what was on the ground, but what the arriving world had already agreed was not.

A conquest two generations old

Across the south-west lay something entirely different, and its recency is the sharpest fact in this landscape.

Mzilikazi kaMashobana of the Khumalo had been one of Shaka's commanders. Around 1821 or 1822, in a quarrel over cattle taken on a raid and withheld from the king, he broke away northward with a few hundred followers. For the next fifteen years he moved and fought and absorbed — through the Transvaal, harried by Griqua commandos and then by the Voortrekkers — and in the late 1830s crossed the Limpopo and settled his people in the south-west of the plateau, over the wreckage the Nguni passage had already made of the Rozvi. He died in September 1868; after a disputed succession his son Lobengula was installed as king in 1870.

The state he built was stratified by origin, and the strata were named. At the top the *zansi*, the original Nguni core who had come out of the south with him. Below them the *enhla*, Sotho and Tswana taken up along the line of march. At the bottom the *hole*, Shona and Kalanga absorbed after the settlement. Marriage upward was discouraged; advancement was possible, mainly through the regiments. Beyond the directly governed heartland lay a zone of Shona and Kalanga chiefs who paid tribute in what they had — one district in tobacco, another in iron — and were left alone if they paid; beyond that, a zone that was raided for cattle, grain and people; and beyond that, country the impis simply did not reach.

Two things must be held together here without letting either cancel the other.

The first is that this was a real state and Lobengula a real king. His people were authentically Ndebele, spoke Ndebele, buried and married and fought as Ndebele, and would die in large numbers defending it. That the state had been assembled inside living memory out of a Khumalo splinter and a series of absorptions does not make it a fiction, and nothing in what follows should be read as saying so. A thing that was built and then became real is a more durable object than a lie, and the tragedy of Lobengula is exactly that of an actual king of an actual kingdom destroyed by a piece of paper.

The second is that it was not finished. Tribute and raid are not administration. Over most of the plateau the Ndebele king took what he could reach and left the rest; there were Shona chieftaincies that had never seen an impi and others that remembered nothing else. The order was two generations old, its lowest caste was the conquered local population, and it had not had time to become the furniture of anybody's reality outside the heartland. A stranger looking for local grievance to enlist would not have to look far, and would not have to invent it. That is a structural fact about the ground, and it will matter a great deal, twice.

What ran cheaply

There was, however, one thing on the highveld that no state had built and that every state had had to come to terms with.

Across the plateau and into the granite hills of the Matopos ran the cult of the high god — Mwari to the Shona, Mwali or Mlimo in Matabeleland — approached at a set of shrines maintained by a hereditary priesthood, with offices known as the mouth, the eye and the ear, where a voice from a cave answered petitions and the rains were asked for. Alongside it, and interwoven with it, ran the veneration of senior territorial ancestors through recognised mediums, the *mhondoro*, who spoke for the spirits of the land itself and whose authority ran with the territory rather than with any dynasty.

The decisive feature of this arrangement is that it crossed every political boundary the region had. It had served the Rozvi; it survived their fall; and when the Ndebele arrived and conquered its heartland they did not suppress it but honoured it under their own name for the high god and sent to Matonjeni for rain like everyone else. It required no garrison, no salaried official and no coercion. It was maintained by the people who used it because they believed it, and it had outlasted every ruler who had ever tried to rest on it.

Set against that, the record of the incoming faith on the eve is exact and eloquent. Robert Moffat, who had known Mzilikazi since 1829 and was the one white man the king trusted, was permitted in 1859 to plant a London Missionary Society station at Inyati, a short distance from the royal town. The missionaries stayed. They kept their station, buried their children, learned the language, and by the end of the 1880s — thirty years on, with a second station at Hope Fountain and a Jesuit mission in the country since 1879 — they had not made a single Ndebele convert. Mzilikazi and after him Lobengula permitted the mission and forbade the conversion, and anyone showing

signs of interest was moved elsewhere. The teaching was heard, considered, and declined.

Two orders, then, on the eve. One of them had cost nothing to maintain for centuries and was believed by everyone, including its conquerors. The other had had thirty years, an unmolested station, a king's personal friendship, and had converted nobody at all.

The later politics of this country would make a great deal of the shrines and the mediums, and would build a national genealogy on the names of particular ones. That construction belongs to the twentieth century and is a different subject; it should not be read back into 1888. What was there in 1888 was not a resistance movement. It was an old, cheap, unusually resilient way of coordinating a countryside, held sacred by people who had no notion that it would one day be recruited.

Reading the highveld against the framework

Three findings, stated plainly, and one of them revises what this collection has been assuming.

The first is about stacking. The ground the Company was about to enter carried at least three orders of different ages: a Shona world descended from builders in stone whose conquests were so old they had ceased to be experienced as conquests at all and had then fragmented into chieftaincies; over its south-west, an Ndebele state two generations old with its conquered neighbours named as a caste at the bottom of it; and across the whole of it, running through both and older than either, a religious authority that no ruler had built and every ruler had accommodated. The recursion is not one layer under another. It is three, at three degrees of setting, and the newest layer was the least set. The practical consequence for a stranger is arithmetical: over most of the plateau there was no apex to buy, no revenue machinery to inherit, and no single man whose signature could deliver a country — and in the one place where there was such a man, the state behind him had not been there long enough for its subordinate populations to think of his authority as the nature of things.

The second is about the settler, and it is the correction. This collection has generally treated the colonial population as an extension of the metropole — the metropole's arm, holding ground on the metropole's behalf and dependent on its will. The English record from 1366 forward says that is wrong, and says so in the metropole's own legislation. A settler population is not an arm; it is a detachment, and the oldest anxiety the English state ever had about its own colonists was not that they would rebel but that they would *dissolve* — marry in, take the local law, and stop being the king's. The entire

apparatus of legislated racial separation was invented as the answer to that anxiety, five centuries before there was a biology to dress it in, and its first target was always the settler himself. Which means that when such a statute appears in a settler colony it should be read twice: once as an instrument against the conquered, which is how it is usually read, and once as an instrument against the conqueror's own people, which is what it was invented to be.

The third follows from the second and is the one to keep in hand for everything that comes after. The charter of 1606 declares that a subject who moves, and his children born abroad, hold all the liberties of England *as if they had been abiding and born within this our Realm*. That clause creates a class of men who are not colonial subjects but Englishmen at a distance, holding rights they did not receive from the colony and cannot be deprived of by it — or, as they will eventually argue, by England. In 1765 Virginians cited those charters against the Stamp Act. In 1776 the men who held the land and the militia commissions and the assembly seats broke the connection, while the tenant, the servant and the slave supplied the weight and got nothing. A settler colony therefore contains, from its first charter, a body of men who are inside the ruling arrangement — armed, propertied, enfranchised — and who can turn on the metropole in the metropole's own constitutional language. Not the ruled. The rulers' junior partners.

The young man who wrote at Oxford in 1877 that if we had retained America there would at this moment be millions more of English living understood the first half of that perfectly. He was proposing to acquire enough new ground that the loss need not be repeated. What he does not appear to have considered is that the loss had a mechanism, that the mechanism was written into the charters, and that he was about to reproduce it.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are all from public-domain primary texts checked against reproductions of the originals. The preamble of the Statutes of Kilkenny is given in the Anglo-Norman with the standard English rendering, from the text established by H. F. Berry in the 1907 *Statutes and Ordinances of the Parliament of Ireland*; the provisions summarised — treason for marriage, fosterage, godparenthood and concubinage across the line, forfeiture for Irish name, language, dress and mode of riding, treason for pleading at Brehon law, the exclusion of Irish minstrels as spies, the substitution of archery for hurling — are from that statute and are paraphrased, not quoted, except where marked. Keith Busby's new edition and translation for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, and David Green's work on the statute as legislation, are modern scholarship and are credited, not quoted. The clause of the first charter of Virginia of 10 April 1606 is quoted exactly from the enrolled text; Patrick Henry's Stamp Act resolves of 30 May 1765 are quoted in part from the copy in the Jefferson

papers, and the wording of that copy differs slightly from other transcriptions of the resolves, which are variously reported. The Dilke passages are quoted exactly from *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867*, verified against the full text of the 1869 two-volumes-in-one edition. Rhodes's "Confession of Faith" is quoted, with its original spelling and punctuation, from the text printed in John E. Flint's *Cecil Rhodes* and reproduced in several university documentary collections; the manuscript was written at Oxford on 2 June 1877 and amended at Kimberley later that year, and readers should know that its transmission is through a published transcription rather than a facsimile.

Where figures are contested they are given as ranges or as approximations. The population of Great Zimbabwe at its height is estimated at something on the order of ten to twenty thousand, and the enclosures at roughly seven hundred hectares; both are archaeological estimates and neither is firm. De Beers Consolidated's share of world diamond production in 1888–89 is variously given at about ninety to ninety-five per cent. The dating of Mzilikazi's break from Shaka (c. 1821–22), of the Nguni passage through the plateau (c. 1826–1838), and of the Ndebele settlement in the south-west (c. 1838–1840) are all approximate in the sources. No reliable count of the African population of the territory on the eve exists, and none is offered here; the absence is itself worth recording, since the men who were about to divide the country by acreage had no idea how many people were on it.

The chronology and structure of the Mutapa and Rozvi states, the caste organisation of the Ndebele kingdom and the character of its overlordship — direct rule in the heartland, tribute from acknowledged chiefs, raiding beyond, and a periphery untouched — and the organisation of the Mwari shrines and the *mhondoro* mediums are drawn from modern scholarship, paraphrased and credited: principally M. L. Daneel on the Matopos shrines, M. F. C. Bourdillon on Shona society, Richard Werbner on regional cults, R. Kent Rasmussen on Mzilikazi's kingdom, and Peter Garlake on Great Zimbabwe. Terence Ranger's work stands behind much of what is known about the religious authorities of this region and is credited here; it is also, by his own later account, work that a subsequent nationalist historiography drew on heavily, and this study takes no position in that argument at this stage beyond noting that the shrines and mediums described here are described as they stood before that later construction was built on them. The account of the Ulster plantation, the Irish Society and the reluctance of the London livery companies follows the standard published work on the Londonderry plantation; the parallel with the simultaneous Virginia subscription is drawn from the same literature. The German eastward settlement and the origin of the Junker estates are given from the general medieval literature and are not the subject of this study.

Finally, a caution that will apply to every part of what follows. The written record of this country in 1888 was made almost entirely by missionaries, hunters, traders and concession-seekers, all of them from one side, most of them with an interest. Ndebele and Shona accounts of the same years survive largely as oral tradition recorded later, often by the same hands. Where the two disagree, that is said. Where only one exists, that is said too.

THE MOST RUINOUS ITEM

The violence that put the arrangement on the ground, 1890–1897 — a company that could not afford an army, paid its soldiers in land it did not own, and discovered what that costs

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What they came for

It is worth being exact about the object, because almost everything that follows is the consequence of that object failing.

The British South Africa Company was chartered on 29 October 1889 and it was chartered to mine. The paper it held was a mineral concession; the money behind it was Kimberley money looking for a second Witwatersrand; the men who subscribed did so on the expectation of reefs. Nobody in London or Cape Town had drawn up a plan to clear a country of its inhabitants and settle Englishmen on it, and it would be a Whiggish falsification to write the first years as though they had. What the Company wanted, in 1889, was gold — a mineral, which requires a workforce and a railhead but not the removal of anybody. On that object the arrangement would have looked more like the Rand than like Ulster.

Two things then happened, in this order, and they are the engine of the whole study. The Company could not pay its expedition in cash, so it paid in farms. And the gold was not there.

Two hundred men paid in land

On 1 January 1890 Frank Johnson, aged twenty-three, contracted to deliver the occupation of Mashonaland in nine months for £87,500 with about two hundred and fifty men — undertaking to cut a wagon road from Palapye to Mount Hampden by 15 July and to hold a portion of the territory until the end of September. Recruiting offices opened at Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Queenstown, Kimberley and Johannesburg. Over two thousand men applied. The notices offered each volunteer

three thousand acres of land and fifteen gold claims, with a stand in the township to be founded.

Read those terms as an accountant would. The Company was buying an expedition with an asset it did not possess, in a country it did not hold, under a paper that granted it minerals and not an acre of soil. Every recruit who signed was accepting payment in the future dispossession of people none of them had met. This was not a policy of settlement. It was a way of hiring men without money, and it is the point at which land entered the arrangement — not as the object of the enterprise but as its unpaid wage bill.

Rhodes added one refinement. On his advice Johnson selected, from the thousands of applicants, a high proportion of the sons of wealthy families — the reasoning being that if the column were destroyed by Lobengula, the families would have the standing to force the British government into a rescue. The men were chosen partly for the value of their relatives as a lobby. A private company insured its expedition against annihilation by loading it with hostages whose deaths would be politically expensive to the Crown.

The column crossed into the country in July and reached its destination on 12 September 1890, where the flag went up at what became Fort Salisbury. There was no battle. Johnson was candid about why: his object, he wrote afterwards, was to complete his contract as fast as possible, avoiding opposition and fighting like the plague. The route had been drawn to skirt the kraals of the chiefs. The first occupation of the country cost, so far as the record shows, no lives at all — because it did not touch the one state on the plateau capable of resisting it, and because the scattered Shona chieftaincies it passed through had no reason yet to think that a line of wagons was a conquest.

The Pioneer Corps was disbanded on 1 October 1890 and its members went to peg their farms. Two hundred–odd men now held title, of a sort, to six hundred thousand acres of a country whose owners had not been consulted, and they held it in a territory where the Company still had no legal power to grant land, no courts, and no revenue.

The gold that was not there

The prospecting began at once and by 1891 something over a thousand claims had been pegged. The reefs were shallow and thin. The ancient workings the pioneers found everywhere — and there were many, because the Shona had been mining and trading gold for centuries — turned out to mark deposits that earlier miners had already worked out to the water table.

The financial record is unambiguous about how fast this registered. In July 1891 the Company had about £280,000 in cash. By December it had £144,000. The outstanding seventeen shillings a share was called up. Rhodes, Alfred Beit and Gold Fields of South Africa each put in £500 a month; De Beers, which had already lent £70,000, agreed to a further £3,500 a month, and these payments continued for over three years. A diamond monopoly and two private fortunes were quietly subsidising a chartered government.

In London the criticism was public and specific. Henry Labouchère, editor of *Truth*, argued through 1891 that the Company was putting out promotional matter about a second Rand in order to hold up its own share price, and in December 1891 he printed a letter from a miner who had spent over a year in Manicaland and Mashonaland:

> my own firm conviction is that were one ten-stamp battery at work for six months on any one of the many reefs I have visited and examined, the claims and pretensions of Mashonaland to being a gold-producing country would be ruthlessly dispelled.

Two years later Labouchère quoted Rhodes telling an audience in Salisbury that Mashonaland was equal in size to France and its sparse population had pegged out four hundred miles of gold-bearing claims, and answered that he had never doubted there was gold in Mashonaland, nor that a speculative population had pegged out a great many claims. The distinction between the two propositions is the whole of the Company's position in 1893.

So by the middle of 1893 the enterprise had a defective asset, a monthly deficit covered by its directors' other companies, several hundred settlers on farms that produced almost nothing, and one thing of value it had not yet taken: the country to the south-west, where the cattle were, where the grazing was better, and where a state stood in the way.

The most ruinous item

Before the war there was the arithmetic that made the war's form inevitable, and it is set out with unusual frankness in the memoir of Hugh Marshall Hole, who was inside the administration:

> The company's funds were running low, and hardly any revenue was to be expected for months to come. The most ruinous item of expenditure was the cost, amounting to about £150,000 a year, for the police force, which

> the Imperial authorities required the company to maintain as a safeguard against attacks from the natives

— and Rhodes and Jameson, he goes on, put their heads together to devise some means of ridding themselves of this white elephant, pooh-poohing the notion that the settlers, who were mostly men in the prime of life and accustomed to firearms, could not defend themselves.

This is the sentence the module is named for and it deserves to be looked at slowly. The force that held the country down was, on the Company's books, its largest single cost and its least productive. The imperial government had made it a condition of the arrangement precisely because a chartered company holding a country with no soldiers is a liability to the Crown. And the Company's response to the cost was not to withdraw and not to reduce its ambitions. It was to disband the police and transfer the function to the settlers, who would perform it for nothing — because they had already been paid, in land, and had a direct interest in the land's continued safety.

That is a cheap floor, and it is cheap in the short term only. An armed settler body is not a police force. It has no chain of command reaching to London, no institutional reason for restraint, and a very direct financial interest in more country becoming available. When Jameson handled Ndebele incursions across the Mashonaland border tactfully through the first half of 1893 — as he did, and for the plain reason that the Company was nearly broke — the settlers read the tact as cringing to the powerful, and resented it, because their Shona labourers ran away when an impi came near and their workings stood idle. The men who had replaced the police as the country's armed force were the men most impatient for a war.

No pay, but land and loot

The occasion arrived in July 1893. A dispute over cattle — Shona taking Ndebele beasts, in an area the Ndebele regarded as theirs to tax and the Company regarded as its own — brought an Ndebele force across the border to punish the offenders. The punishment was carried out in and around Fort Victoria, in front of the settlers, including in the streets of the township. The number of Shona killed is given in the Company's own accounts as around four hundred; that figure comes from interested parties and should be treated as an order of magnitude rather than a count.

Whether the war was sought or stumbled into is the question the sources actually answer, and they answer it in the Company's favour on intent and against it on conduct. There is no document showing that Jameson engineered the incident, and his

handling of the previous eighteen months argues against it. What the record does show is that once the incident occurred it was recognised at once as an opportunity, and that the machinery assembled to exploit it was assembled with a speed that says something about how ready the ground was.

On 14 August 1893 the terms of enlistment were drawn up. They are the central document of this module and they should be read entire, because they state, in a form no later apologetics can soften, what the men who conquered Matabeleland were paid and who paid them.

The volunteers of the three columns were to receive **no pay**. In place of wages, each man was entitled to:

a farm of 3,000 morgen — some 6,350 acres — to be marked out anywhere in Matabeleland, at a quitrent of ten shillings a year, the farm to be pegged within four months, with the Company reserving the right to buy it back at £3 per morgen;

fifteen gold reef claims and five alluvial claims;

and an equal share, among the volunteers, of half of Lobengula's cattle, the Company taking the other half.

Set the 1890 terms beside the 1893 terms and the movement is visible in a single comparison: three thousand acres to walk into Mashonaland unopposed; three thousand morgen — more than twice the acreage — to destroy the Ndebele state. The price of a man had risen with the risk, and both prices were payable exclusively out of property belonging to people who had not yet been defeated. The wage bill could only be met by winning, and could only be met in full by taking everything.

There is no need to editorialise on this. It is an enlistment contract, it survives, and it says what it says.

Shangani and Bembesi

The columns from Salisbury and Fort Victoria joined at Iron Mine Hill on 16 October 1893. Their combined strength when they reached the Shangani was about 1,727 men, of whom roughly 672 were white and about 1,015 were Shona, with 414 horses. They carried Martini-Henry rifles, two seven-pounder guns, a one-pounder Hotchkiss, five galloping Maxims, a Gardner and a Nordenfelt.

That composition should be stated plainly rather than passed over. Three men in five of the force that destroyed the Ndebele kingdom were Shona — drawn from the tributary

and raided populations of a conquest two generations old, which had never finished taking, and which had left below itself a stratum with a live grievance and a name, *hole*, to mark it. The Company did not have to manufacture this. It arrived on top of an unfinished conquest and found its infantry waiting. The arithmetic is worth holding: it got the majority of its army free, from people who had every reason at that moment to think that the enemy of their overlord was worth marching with. Three years later most of those same districts rose against it.

On the night of 25 October the column, having crossed the Shangani and laagered in ground with clear fields of fire, was attacked. The Ndebele regiments came on repeatedly against machine guns and artillery in the open. Estimates of their dead range from about five hundred, which is the figure derived from the more careful reconstructions, to fifteen hundred in the more excited accounts; the wounded were carried away and no count was ever made. On the Company's side four men were killed. Rhodes, writing to Sir Gordon Sprigg afterwards, observed that the shooting must have been excellent, and that it proved the men were not only brave but cool, and did not lose their heads though surrounded with the hordes.

On 1 November, at Bembesi, some thirty miles from Bulawayo, the amaNdebele attacked a defended laager in daylight and in direct defiance of Lobengula's instructions, which had been to strike at river crossings. The Imbizo and Ingubo regiments charged four hundred yards of open ground under Maxim fire and charged three times. Around two and a half thousand were killed. The memorial the Rhodesian authorities themselves erected on the site in 1961 records, in English and Ndebele, that the Matabele charged with the greatest courage three times in the face of machine gun fire, which is an unusual thing for a conqueror's monument to say and is worth recording as evidence of how the settler order chose to remember its own founding.

Lobengula burned Bulawayo rather than leave it and went north. The Company occupied the ruins on 4 November. On 4 December a patrol of thirty-four men under Major Allan Wilson, sent across the Shangani after the king, was cut off and killed to the last man. Lobengula died in January 1894, probably of smallpox, in flight, in a country he had ruled for twenty-four years.

The whole campaign, from the crossing of the border to the fall of the capital, took under a month.

What one month bought

The conquest paid its bill immediately and the terms of the payment are the beginning of everything the rest of this study examines.

The cattle of Matabeleland were declared the property of the Company by right of conquest and confiscated wholesale, half of them going to the volunteers under the August agreement. For a pastoral people whose wealth, marriage, standing and food security were all held in cattle, this was not a fine; it was the dismantling of the economy. Farms were marked out on the promised scale: by the middle of 1894 more than ten thousand square miles had been docketed for European farmland. Reserves were laid out in the north and north-east of Matabeleland for the people removed from it. A hut tax was introduced, authorised under the Matabeleland Order in Council of 1894 and levied at ten shillings a hut — a sum payable only in cash, which almost nobody had, and therefore payable only by going to work for the people who had just taken your cattle. Men who had been the ruling caste of a state found themselves labouring on the Company's works, in many cases beside the *hole* who had marched with the columns.

Then, between 1894 and 1896, the country was hit by locusts, by drought, and by rinderpest, which reached Matabeleland in early 1896 and killed something between eighty and ninety per cent of the cattle that remained. The administration's response to the epizootic was to shoot herds to check its spread, which to the owners was indistinguishable from a further confiscation. By March 1896 the road to Bulawayo was lined with abandoned wagons and dead trek oxen.

Forty-eight men

On 29 December 1895 Jameson took most of the country's armed force south and rode into the Transvaal in an attempt to overthrow the Kruger government. The raid failed within days and the raiders were captured. What it left behind, in a territory of some four thousand settlers, was a garrison variously reported at a few dozen men.

The rising began in Matabeleland in the third week of March 1896 — prematurely, as it happens, when a group of young men killed a native policeman on 20 March before whatever signal had been intended. Within about a week some hundred and forty white settlers had been killed in Matabeleland; the outlying farms, mines and stores were burned. In June a second, and largely separate, rising began in Mashonaland, opening with an attack on the native commissioner's camp at Mrewa on 20 June, and killed

something over a hundred more. Hugh Marshall Hole's total for settlers dead across both risings is 372.

The survivors laagered in Bulawayo and Gwelo. The Company, having disbanded its police to save £150,000 a year, now had to be rescued: an imperial mounted infantry force of some 380 regulars under Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. H. Alderson landed at Beira and reached Salisbury on 9 August 1896, and further contingents came up from South Africa. The saving had lasted three years and was now being repaid at a rate nobody in Kimberley had budgeted for.

The suppression that followed was of a particular kind, because the risings were not a field war and could not be won by another Bembesi. People took to caves and granite strongholds; the columns burned kraals, seized or destroyed grain, and dynamited caves. Alderson's own returns for the Salisbury patrols in the two months from mid-June record twenty-eight patrols and at least sixteen engagements, in which seven whites and four black auxiliaries were killed on the colonial side, and about two hundred and twenty-three people on the other — a hundred and thirty-seven of them in a single sweep through the Hartley hills. That ratio, not the ratio at Shangani, is what the second war looked like.

The case of Chief Chingaira Makoni is the one to set down in full, because it happened in the open and was recorded by the men who did it. Makoni's stronghold at Gwindingwi was attacked on 4 August 1896 without success. He and a few dozen followers were then besieged in caves from the end of August, and forced out after several days by dynamite and by pledges of safe conduct. He came out in the night of 3–4 September. Plans for a regular trial were then abandoned because some of his men had escaped and it was feared that if Makoni got away the district would rise again. A court-martial was convened, one of the native commissioners serving as both interpreter and defence counsel, and he was found guilty of being a rebel, sentenced to be shot, and shot at once. His head was removed. It was not the only one; the taking of heads as trophies from this campaign is documented, and some of them went to Britain.

In Mashonaland the fighting ran on into 1897. The medium of Kaguvi surrendered in October 1897; Charwe, the medium of Nehanda, was taken in December. Both were tried in Salisbury, arraigned on 20 February 1898 and convicted on 2 March, she for the killing of the native commissioner H. H. Pollard, he for the killing of a policeman. Alfred Milner, as High Commissioner, authorised the sentences. They were hanged in Salisbury gaol on 27 April 1898, with several others condemned in the same proceedings. The only surviving eyewitness account of the executions is by the Jesuit

priest who had been working to convert the condemned, and who baptised the others and failed with her.

The bill

The count of the African dead across 1893 and 1896–97 does not exist and cannot be constructed, and that absence is itself the first finding. Nobody was counting. The historian David Beach, working carefully, put total African losses in 1896–97 at conservatively five thousand and thought they were unlikely to have doubled that figure at least as a result of battle — so a range of roughly five to ten thousand, in a campaign of about eighteen months. Lewis Gann gives eight thousand without stating a source. To that must be added the dead of 1893, on the order of three to four thousand from the two set-piece battles alone, and an unknown number from the burnings, the destroyed grain, and the winter that followed.

Against that, the settler dead are known to the individual: 372, with names, and memorials at Pongo and Fort Rixon and Inyati recording them family by family, including the children. One patrol of thirty-four men on the Shangani became the sacred founding episode of the colony, painted, recited and taught in its schools for eighty years.

That asymmetry in the record is not incidental and it is not a failure of scholarship. It is what a conquest's archive is for. The dead who are counted are the ones whose deaths had to be accounted for to somebody — to relatives with standing, to a board, to a parliament. The dead who are not counted are the ones nobody was required to explain. When the reader of this study reaches, later, the question of what the arrangement cost, that question will already have been half-answered by the decision, taken in 1896 by men with other things on their minds, not to write the numbers down.

Two ways of getting the story wrong

The events of 1896–97 have been narrated twice, by parties who despised each other and who arrived at nearly the same shape.

The Company's own account, and Marshall Hole's, held that the rising was a conspiracy: secretly planned over weeks or months by witchdoctors, concealed from every white man in the country, and unleashed on a signal — in almost every kraal, Hole wrote, the people put on the black beads that were the badge of the mhondoro, and the fighting men waited quietly for the signal to strike down the whites at one blow. This

account had an obvious function. If the rising was a plot hatched by a priesthood, it was not a response to the cattle seizures, the hut tax, the forced labour or the flogging, and the men who had imposed those things bore no responsibility for what followed.

In 1967 Terence Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia* reversed the moral polarity of that story while keeping its structure: a coordinated, pan-ethnic, proto-national movement, planned in advance, directed by the priests of the Mwari shrines and the senior spirit mediums, breaking out simultaneously across the country. It was a major work and it did something the previous historiography had refused to do, which was to treat Africans as agents with strategy. It was also enormously useful to a nationalist movement then in formation, which took it up as a founding genealogy.

In the 1970s Julian Cobbing, in "The Absent Priesthood," and David Beach, in his work on the Shona rising, dismantled the reconstruction. Beach's conclusion is blunt: the rising was neither pre-planned nor simultaneous; through the second quarter of 1896 there was limited, separate, unconnected resistance in various places, and the contact certain central Shona leaders made with Mkwati in the Ndebele country began as a request for medicine against the locusts. Cobbing denied that the Mwari cult played any significant organising role at all. Ranger himself, in later work, conceded a good deal of the ground, noting Werbner's finding that the cult's structure — scattered across four principal shrines and a number of lesser ones, concerned with rain and tribute and its own internal politics rather than with the survival of any state — did not lend itself to mobilising people for war.

Two claims that circulate widely should be flagged in the same breath. The story that the American scout Frederick Burnham shot the Mlimo in a cave in June 1896 and thereby broke the rising is a settler adventure tale and is not accepted. And the words attributed to Charwe on the scaffold, that her bones would rise again, appear in no contemporary record of an execution for which we have one eyewitness account, written by a priest. That the line has become one of the most powerful sentences in the country's national consciousness is a real and important fact about the twentieth century. It is not evidence about April 1898.

The discipline this imposes is uncomfortable and it runs both ways. There is no need for a conspiracy to explain 1896. A population had lost its cattle twice over, been taxed in a currency it could not obtain, been driven onto reserves and into wage labour, watched its herds die of a disease that arrived with the strangers, and then observed the strangers' army ride away and get itself captured in another country. People rose in different places for overlapping reasons, and some of them consulted the shrines, as they

consulted the shrines about everything. Making that into a national plan flatters it in a way that obscures how bad the provocation actually was.

Reading the conquest against the framework

Three findings, and the first is a correction to something this collection has taken for granted.

A conqueror who cannot afford his army does not become less violent. He becomes more violent, and structurally so. The standing account has treated force as a fixed price the conqueror pays and then reduces as belief takes over. What happened here was different. The Company found its police the most ruinous item on its books, could not pay it, and so converted a salaried force into an unsalaried one by paying men in the property of people not yet conquered. That conversion does three things at once. It removes the chain of command that restrains a police force. It gives the men under arms a direct financial interest in further conquest, because their wages are only redeemable out of territory still in other hands. And it turns the wage bill into a debt that can be discharged only by total victory — you cannot pay half a man in half a farm. An underfunded conqueror is therefore committed to a more complete dispossession than a solvent one, and the enlistment terms of 14 August 1893 are that mechanism written out in a legal instrument, with a quitrent attached.

Where the object is ground, the army does not demobilise; it becomes the population. A conqueror after the surplus of existing labour breaks the apex once and then runs the machine, and his force can shrink as the machine takes over. Here there was no machine, and what the men had been paid in was the ground itself, which meant that after the fighting stopped the victors did not go home — they spread out across the country, individually, on isolated farms, holding title that only remained good while the arrangement held. That is why the 1896 rising killed farmers and storekeepers rather than soldiers, and why 372 civilians is the shape of the casualty list. The force did not withdraw into garrisons. It dissolved into the countryside and stayed armed, which is the condition the colony would remain in, in one form or another, for the next eighty years.

And the substrate of an unfinished conquest is recruitable, but not transferable. Three men in five of the force that broke the Ndebele state in 1893 were Shona, and they were available because the state they helped break had not been there long enough to make its subordinate populations feel that its authority was simply how the world was. That is a real and cheap advantage, and it is the reason the first war was won in a

month by a bankrupt company. But it bought nothing durable. The men who marched against Lobengula were not consenting to the Company; they were settling with the Ndebele. Within three years the hut tax, the labour demands and the land pegging had produced risings in the same districts, and the Company discovered that having been useful to somebody against his old master creates no obligation whatever toward his new one. The recruitment was real. The loyalty was never on offer, because it was never asked for and nothing was ever given in exchange for it.

What the seven years bought, then, was this: a country held, at a price the Company had tried very hard not to pay and paid anyway; a defeated people stripped of the cattle that had been its wealth and taxed in a coin it had to earn from the men who took them; ten thousand square miles of farms marked out; somewhere between eight and fifteen thousand people dead, almost none of them counted; and an arrangement that could not now be reversed, because too many men held title deeds that depended on it.

The gold, when the assays came in properly, was never a second Rand.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here come from published texts, checked against reproductions. Hugh Marshall Hole's account of the police as the most ruinous item of expenditure, and his description of the rising as a concealed plot signalled by the black beads of the mhondoro, are from his memoir *Old Rhodesian Days* (1928) and from his official *Reports on the Native Disturbances in Rhodesia, 1896–97* (1898), quoted as reproduced in the secondary literature; Hole was the Company's own man and his testimony is used here as evidence of what the administration thought and said, not as a neutral account. Frank Johnson's statement that his object was to avoid opposition and fighting like the plague is from his memoir, quoted in the same literature. Labouchère's campaign in *Truth*, including the miner's letter of December 1891 and the exchange over Rhodes's Salisbury speech of October 1893, is quoted as reproduced. Rhodes's remark to Sir Gordon Sprigg about the shooting at the Shangani is quoted as reproduced in the standard accounts and I have not seen the manuscript. The wording of the Bembesi memorial plaque of 1961 is given as it stands on the monument. The terms of the enlistment agreement of 14 August 1893 are given from the reproductions in the historiography; the figure is 3,000 morgen, which converts to roughly 6,350 acres, and readers will find "6,000 acres" in several accounts, which appears to be a rounding of the same provision rather than a different term.

Figures are given as ranges where they are contested, and several are contested badly. Johnson's contract price of £87,500, the Company's cash position of about £280,000 in July 1891 falling to £144,000 by December, the monthly subventions from Rhodes, Beit, Gold Fields and De Beers, and the police cost of about £150,000 a year are from the administrative and financial record as reported in the modern literature. The strength of the 1893 columns at the Shangani — about 1,727 men, of whom some 672 were white and about 1,015 Shona, with 414 horses, five Maxims, two seven-pounders, a Hotchkiss, a Gardner and a Nordenfelt — follows the detailed reconstruction of that campaign; other accounts give "700," which counts only the white contingent. Ndebele dead at the

Shangani are given variously from about 500 to 1,500 and at Bembesi at about 2,500, with no count made of the wounded; the number of Shona killed in the Victoria incident of July 1893 is reported by the Company as about 400 and comes from an interested source. Settler deaths in the risings are given as about 141 in Matabeleland in the first week and about 103 in Mashonaland, with Hole's total of 372 across both. African deaths in 1896–97 are given following David Beach, who put them conservatively at five thousand and thought they were unlikely to have doubled that as a result of battle; Lewis Gann gives eight thousand without a source. Rinderpest mortality among cattle is given at eighty to ninety per cent. The precise total cost to the Company of the 1896–97 suppression is not established here; I have found no figure I can stand behind.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited. The historiographical dispute over the organisation of the risings runs through Terence Ranger's *Revolt in Southern Rhodesia 1896–7* (1967), Julian Cobbing's "The Absent Priesthood: Another Look at the Rhodesian Risings of 1896–1897," David Beach's "'Chimurenga': The Shona Rising of 1896–97" and his work on Kaguvi, and Richard Werbner's fieldwork on the regional cults; Ranger's own later revisions are noted where they bear. The account of Company finances and of the development of the fiscal system draws on recent work on the BSAC's revenue problem, including Honest Elias Koke's study of settler politics and the fiscal system between 1890 and 1922. The reconstruction of Alderson's patrol returns and of the pattern of the Mashonaland campaign follows recent scholarship on Rhodes and violence in Zimbabwe, which notes explicitly that the published record of the Mashonaland campaign up to July 1897 is incomplete and that this is an open research problem — a caution I pass on rather than paper over.

Two widely repeated stories are set aside here. The account of the Mlimo being shot in a cave by Frederick Burnham in June 1896 is a settler adventure narrative and is not supported. The words attributed to Charwe on the scaffold appear in no contemporary record; the single surviving eyewitness account of the executions of 27 April 1898 is that of Fr Francis Richartz. Some sources give 28 April for the executions and the point remains contested. The provenance of the removed heads, and the current location of any of them, is the subject of ongoing repatriation claims and is not settled; it is noted here as unresolved rather than asserted.

THIRTY-ONE MILLION AND FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND

The settlement — how the conquered country was divided, under whose instrument, and why the law that said anyone might buy land produced a ratio of seven hundred to one

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The wage falls due

The men who rode against Lobengula in October 1893 had been promised, in place of wages, a farm of three thousand morgen anywhere in Matabeleland, fifteen reef claims and five alluvial claims, and an equal share among themselves of half the king's cattle. In 1894 the account was settled.

The cattle went first, because they were movable and because they were the thing the Ndebele could least afford to lose. All cattle in Matabeleland were declared the property of the Company by right of conquest, and half of them were divided among the volunteers. The farms followed. By the middle of 1894 more than ten thousand square miles had been docketed for European farmland — this in a territory where, four years earlier, a chartered mining company had held no legal right to a single acre and had said so in writing to its own recruits.

What is worth noticing about this first division is that it was not a policy. It was the discharge of a debt. The men who received the country's best grazing in 1894 did so because they had been hired on those terms in August 1893 by an administration that had no money, and the terms had been drawn by a committee of the men who would be paid. The shape of the colony's land tenure for the next ninety years was set by an enlistment contract negotiated between a bankrupt company and its own creditors, in advance of the conquest whose proceeds would satisfy it.

The commission that made the reserves

The people who had been removed from the ground had to be put somewhere, and in 1894 a Land Commission was appointed to say where. Its chairman was Judge J. Vincent. Its second member was Captain H. M. Heyman, who was the Company's man. The imperial government was represented by Captain C. F. Lindsell. The Commission toured Matabeleland, interviewed white witnesses, and reported to the High Commissioner for South Africa on 29 October 1894.

It assigned two reserves, Gwaai and Shangani, amounting to somewhere between about 2.2 and 2.5 million acres, for the sole occupation of the Ndebele. At least five-sixths of the Gwaai reserve had no surface water for nine months of the year. The Shangani reserve lay in the tsetse belt, which meant that the people whose entire wealth, standing and diet had been cattle were being sent to a place where cattle die. The Commission does not appear to have known this. It had not looked.

The two criteria that were applied are not in dispute, because the Commission's own reasoning discloses them: the reserves should be far enough from the area of potential European settlement that the Ndebele would not be a threat to it, and they should not be in country that might later be attractive for European use. Everything outside the reserves was treated as open. Three years later the quality of what had been set aside came under heavy criticism in the Martin Report, which is the first official acknowledgement in the record that the reserves were not habitable in the way they had been described.

One detail should be set down without comment, because it does not need any. Captain Heyman, who sat on the commission that decided which land the conquered would keep and which would be available for alienation, later became managing director of Willoughby's Consolidated, which by 1912 held over 1,300,000 acres of the country.

The forced removals to Gwaai and Shangani were among the grievances that produced the rising of 1896, and Rhodes, sitting in the Matopos in August of that year and needing the fighting to stop, undertook to halt them. The rising ended. The reserves did not.

The article that said anyone might buy

In 1898 the arrangement received its constitution. The Southern Rhodesia Order in Council of that year set out, among much else, two provisions about land, and they were designed to sit together.

The first required the Company from time to time to assign to the natives land sufficient for their occupation and suitable for their agricultural and pastoral requirements, whether as tribes or as portions of tribes. This was the reserve-making power, and it was permissive in the most useful possible way: *from time to time*, on the Company's own motion, with no acreage named and no date fixed. It produced, by 1902, some twenty million acres of reserves out of about ninety-six million, and it produced them in something over sixty separate blocks, chosen by the body whose interest lay in choosing badly.

The second provided that a native might acquire and own land on the same conditions as a person who was not a native.

That second clause is the settlement's primary fiction, and it deserves to be looked at with more care than it usually gets, because it is not a lie in any ordinary sense. It was true. It meant what it said. Any African in Southern Rhodesia could, in law, walk into the Company's land office and buy a farm on precisely the terms available to a Scotsman off the boat. There was no racial bar. There was, for a quarter of a century, no legal impediment whatever.

The same architecture governed the vote. When the Legislative Council was constituted, the qualifications set by the Acting High Commissioner in Proclamation No. 17 of 1898 required a voter to be a British subject, male, twenty-one or over, able to write his address and occupation, and to satisfy one of three tests: ownership of a registered mining claim in Southern Rhodesia, or occupation of immovable property worth £75, or receipt of wages or salary of £50 a year, the latter two with six months' continuous residence. All voters went onto a common roll. Race is not mentioned. In 1912 the qualifications were doubled — £150 of property or £100 a year in wages — and the literacy test was raised to writing fifty words of English from dictation.

Here is the mechanism in its finished form. The instrument that admits you to the settlement never names the thing it is sorting for. It names money, and letters, and a title deed, and it applies the test to everybody equally, in a country where the conquest has just taken the cattle, allocated the watered land, and set the wage. The bar is not that you are African. The bar is that you have £75 — which you would have had, in the form of cattle, until quite recently.

What the fiction did

The outcome of the open door was reported to the House of Lords on 23 June 1926 by the Earl of Clarendon, speaking for His Majesty's Government, in a single sentence:

> The Europeans in that territory have acquired about 31,000,000 acres, whereas the natives have acquired only some 45,000.

Under an identical legal right, exercised over twenty-eight years, on a common market, by the two populations of one country. Thirty-one million and forty-five thousand: a ratio of about six hundred and ninety to one, in a country where the second population outnumbered the first by roughly twenty to one.

Clarendon's gloss on this figure is the most instructive part of the speech: *the native has not availed himself so far of this provision to any great extent*. Not that he could not. That he did not. The construction is the whole point of the clause. A settlement that bars a man by name is visible and must be defended; a settlement that leaves the door open and prices the threshold beyond him produces the same division and makes the division look like his own choice.

And the division was not, in any case, chiefly between white farmers and African peasants. The Company's own manager noted in 1912 that the fifteen principal land-owning companies held over eight million acres between them — Amalgamated Properties of Rhodesia with 1,544,000 and Willoughby's Consolidated with 1,339,000 heading the list — and that over six million of those acres lay within twenty-five miles of the railway lines, which was the only land in the country whose produce could reach a market. The largest single landowner of all was the British South Africa Company. By 1913 some twenty-one million acres had been alienated to Europeans, much of it held by syndicates that did not farm it and had no intention of farming it.

Meanwhile the Company, on the strength of owning the country, was charging Africans living on unalienated land a rent of £1 a head a year on top of the hut tax; and Europeans who had acquired alienated land treated the Africans already living on it as having no interest in it and levied rents of their own. By the mid-1920s some 122,000 people were living on unalienated Crown land under the first arrangement and about 150,000 on European-owned land under the second — a quarter of a million people paying rent to hold ground they had been on before anyone arrived.

Whoever now owns the unalienated lands

The question of who actually owned the country was not litigated until it was worth litigating, and it became worth litigating when the Company's charter was running out and self-government for the settlers was in prospect. The Company's parting move was to claim the unalienated lands — some forty-odd million acres — as its own property.

The case went to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and was decided in July 1918, reported as *In re Southern Rhodesia*. The Aborigines' Protection Society intervened to put the case that the land had belonged to the inhabitants before either Company or Crown had heard of it, and belonged to them still.

Lord Sumner, delivering the judgment, disposed of that argument in a passage that has been quoted against the common law ever since:

> The estimation of the rights of aboriginal tribes is always inherently difficult. Some tribes are so low in the scale of social organization that their usages and conceptions of rights and duties are not to be reconciled with the institutions or the legal ideas of civilized society. Such a gulf cannot be bridged. It would be idle to impute to such people some shadow of the rights known to our law and then to transmute it into the substance of transferable rights of property as we know them.

On the fate of the kingdom the judgment is equally plain, and worth quoting because it is one of the few places where a court states the mechanism of a conquest without embarrassment: King Lobengula's kingdom perished with him; where he had formerly reigned an undisputed monarch there was now no longer any sovereign left. And then the conclusion, which is the sentence the whole thirty years had been travelling towards:

> By the will of the Crown and in exercise of its rights the old state of things, whatever its exact nature, as it was before 1893, has passed away and another and, as their Lordships do not doubt, a better has been established in lieu of it. Whoever now owns the unalienated lands, the natives do not.

Note the shape of the outcome. Two parties argued: a chartered company and the Crown. A third was spoken for by a philanthropic society. The Company lost — the unalienated lands were the Crown's. The Africans lost. And the Company, having lost the case, was paid: the settlement reached in the early 1920s gave it £3,750,000, together with relief on the debts incurred in administering the territory, and it kept its mineral rights, which were the thing it had come for in 1889 and had held onto through everything.

The Company had spent thirty years asserting that it owned the country. A court held it did not, and the compensation for that finding was the largest sum any party to the arrangement ever received.

The Norman precedent, offered in the Lords

Eight years later, on 23 June 1926, Lord Olivier rose in the House of Lords to call attention to the report of the Morris Carter Land Commission, which was proposing to abolish the open door and divide the country by race in law. Arguing that the Africans living on and cultivating tribal land had equitable rights that ought to be recognised, he reached for the nearest precedent that came to a British peer's hand:

> They should be taken into account in the same way, I presume, as William the Conqueror took account of the rights in manors which were annexed by him

There is no need to strain the point; Olivier makes it himself. A conquest of 1893 is to be settled on the principle applied to a conquest of 1066, by a legislature sitting in a country that is itself the residue of that earlier conquest, in a chamber whose senior members hold their titles from it. What Olivier is proposing, incidentally, is generosity — he is on the Africans' side in this debate, and almost alone. He simply takes for granted that the way to treat conquered occupiers is a question with a long English answer.

Three white men to a hundred

The rest of that debate is the clearest set of arithmetic in the whole record, and it is public, and it was published, and nothing followed from it.

Olivier's motion stated the proposal in its own numbers: that out of a total of 78,433,260 acres deemed available for alienation, 48,605,898 should be reserved for alienation exclusively to Europeans, then numbering about 40,000, and 28,933,362 for occupation by natives, then numbering about 800,000. He then did the division out loud. Under the existing allocations, he told the House, *each European has a potential interest in land twenty-nine times as large as that of each native*. Under the Commission's proposals it would rise: to each European a potential interest of *thirty-three and a half times as much land as the potential interest of each native, so that three white men are regarded as economically able to exploit as much land as 100 natives*. His verdict on his own sum: *It appears to me a staggering proposition*.

Set beside that the Commission's own justification, which Olivier read into the record. On whether the country wanted segregation:

> we have no hesitation in finding that an overwhelming majority of those who understand the question are in favour of the existing law being amended, and of the establishment of separate areas in which each of the two races, black and white respectively, should be permitted to acquire interests in land. Missionaries, farmers and town dwellers, the officials of the Native Department, the natives in the out districts and reserves, in so far as they can grasp the subject, and the more advanced natives are, generally speaking, all of one mind in this respect.

In so far as they can grasp the subject. The consent of the governed is being asserted and withdrawn in the same clause, and the clause was printed in a government report and read aloud in Parliament without anyone remarking on it.

And on why it had to be done at all:

> In the world generally the relationships between white and coloured races tend to become more and more embittered; and, of those who have given the subject most thought, many fear that wars of extermination between the races will take place in the future unless every effort is made to secure a better understanding between them.

Olivier's response to that sentence is the one flash of temper in the debate: *Surely that is a very unhappy reflection to have to be made in a Government document after over thirty-three years of British rule in Southern Rhodesia.*

He was answered by Earl Buxton, a former High Commissioner, who did not dispute a single figure. He disputed the practice of counting:

> it seems to me to be an entire misconception of the position to talk about acres per head of white or black population.

The terms of reference, Buxton explained, had never been mathematical; the Commission had been asked to consider what land was sufficient for native requirements now and in the future, and to deal with the matter in a sympathetic and generous spirit. The defence of the division, offered by its most sympathetic imperial defender, is that the division should not be divided out. Buxton then urged that the whole thing be settled *once for all* and as early as possible, before the African population grew any larger — citing South Africa, where the whites had left it too late.

Olivier withdrew his motion. Everyone was courteous. The Under-Secretary undertook that His Majesty's Government would consider the matter carefully. Nothing was

refused, because by 1923 Southern Rhodesia was self-governing and there was nothing left to refuse with.

The Act

The Land Apportionment Act was passed in 1930 and brought into force after the constitutional difficulties had been ironed out. It divided the roughly ninety-six million acres of the colony by race: a European Area of about 49,060,000 acres; Native Reserves of 21,600,000; a Native Purchase Area of about 4,460,000, where Africans with the means might buy freehold; forest area 590,000; undetermined 90,000; and 17,800,000 acres left unassigned for later. The European population at that point was about 50,000. The African population was something over a million.

The Act's other operation was to repeal the clause of the 1898 Order in Council under which a native might acquire land on the same conditions as anyone else. The Commission's stated reason for extinguishing that right was that Africans who bought land could not compete with European landowners and needed protected areas of their own.

The timing is the tell. The open door was closed at the moment it began to open — when African purchasers, and more pressingly African labour tenants and rent-paying squatters producing grain on European farms, had started to compete with white farmers who could not make their own land pay. A right that had been harmless for thirty years while it went unexercised was abolished when exercising it became conceivable.

In the Commons on 22 January 1930, Colonel Wedgwood's question was put in the plainest available words: whether the recent legislation in Southern Rhodesia *which prohibited African Natives from buying or renting land outside the reserves* had received the royal approval, or whether disallowance had been recommended in view of the terms of the constitution. The Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs replied:

> the object of this legislation is to set aside separate areas outside the native reserves as areas in which natives can alone hold and occupy land and other areas in which persons other than natives can alone hold and occupy land.

Two clauses, perfectly balanced, describing a division of forty-nine million acres from four and a half. The grammar is symmetrical. Nothing else is.

Reading the settlement against the framework

The primary fiction of this settlement is a claim of universal right, and that is why it worked. This collection has generally looked for the legal fiction in the instrument that *asserts* the conqueror's title — the charter, the treaty, the concession. Here the load-bearing fiction is the opposite kind: a clause stating that any native may acquire land on the same conditions as any other person, and a franchise on a common roll that never mentions race. Both were true as written. Neither was ever repealed for a quarter of a century. And they produced thirty-one million acres against forty-five thousand.

An open door with a priced threshold is a better instrument than a closed one, for three reasons that the record here demonstrates in turn. It costs nothing to maintain, because the sorting is done by the price and not by an official. It cannot be attacked as discriminatory, because on its face it is not. And it converts the outcome into a verdict on the excluded — which is exactly the move Clarendon makes in 1926, when he reports the figure and adds that the native *has not availed himself of this provision to any great extent*. The exclusion is real, total, and describable as a free choice. That is the most economical fiction in the collection so far, and it is worth naming: not a claim that they may not, but a claim that they may.

Which yields a test with a date attached. An open-door fiction can be told for as long as nobody walks through the door. The moment enough of the excluded begin to qualify, the fiction becomes expensive, and it is abolished — and the reason given for abolishing it will be their protection. Southern Rhodesia dates that moment precisely: 1930, when African purchase and African tenant production had begun to compete, the clause was struck out, and Native Purchase Areas were established so that Africans might buy freehold somewhere that white farmers were not. Where an order rests on an unexercised universal right, watch for the year the right starts being used; the repeal follows.

And the settlement was never two-sided. The largest holder in the country was the Company; fifteen land companies held over eight million acres in 1912, six million of it along the rail, most of it unworked. The individual settler — the man who had actually pegged a farm — stood between a syndicate that had the best ground and would not use it and an African population that could work land more cheaply than he could. This is why the language of "the settlers" as a bloc will not survive contact with the sources, and it is where the study will eventually have to look when it asks who broke from Britain and why. The man with three thousand morgen of veld and no capital was inside the settlement, and he was also being squeezed by it, and he could count.

What the settlement produced, by 1930, was a country in which about one person in twenty held about half the land in law, the other nineteen held about a fifth, and the instrument that had said for thirty-two years that any of them might buy anywhere had just been repealed on the ground that it was not doing them any good.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are all from public-domain primary texts. The passages from the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in *In re Southern Rhodesia* (decided July 1918, reported [1919] AC 211) — Lord Sumner on the estimation of the rights of aboriginal tribes, on the perishing of Lobengula's kingdom, and on the old state of things having passed away — are quoted from reproductions of the judgment text; the "so low in the scale of social organization" passage is additionally verifiable in its quotation by the High Court of Australia in *Mabo v Queensland (No 2)*. Sources differ on whether the judgment was delivered on 26 or 29 July 1918 and it is reported under 1919; that discrepancy is unresolved here. All the 1926 material — Lord Olivier's motion and speech, including the acreages, the twenty-nine-fold and thirty-three-and-a-half-fold ratios, the "staggering proposition," and the William the Conqueror comparison; the two passages he read from the Morris Carter Commission's report, including "in so far as they can grasp the subject" and the passage on wars of extermination; Earl Buxton's rejection of the mathematical basis; and the Earl of Clarendon's figures of 31,000,000 acres against some 45,000 — is quoted exactly from Hansard, HL Deb 23 June 1926, vol 64, cc542–64. Colonel Wedgwood's question and the Under-Secretary's reply are quoted from Hansard, HC Deb 22 January 1930. The franchise qualifications of Proclamation No. 17 of 1898 and their doubling in 1912 are given from the published record of the Legislative Council elections.

Figures are given as ranges or as approximations where the sources disagree, and several do. The Gwaai and Shangani reserves are given at between about 2.2 and 2.5 million acres, depending on the source and on which later adjustments are counted. The Land Apportionment Act's division is given from the schedule as reproduced in the Rhodesian literature — European Area 49,060,000 acres, Native Reserves 21,600,000, Native Purchase Area 4,460,000, Forest 590,000, Undetermined 90,000, Unassigned 17,800,000 — and readers will find the European figure given elsewhere as 49.2 million and the Native Purchase Area as high as seven million, the latter apparently reflecting the Commission's recommendation rather than the Act's schedule. The African population of the colony in 1930 is given as "something over a million" because the colonial censuses of the period are estimates and are not reliable to closer than that; the European figure of about 50,000 is firmer. The compensation paid to the Company in the settlement of the early 1920s is given at £3,750,000 with debt relief; that figure is widely reported but I have not verified it against the settlement instrument itself and it is flagged accordingly. The numbering of the relevant articles of the 1898 Order in Council is given differently in different secondary accounts, so the provisions are described here by their content rather than by article number.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited. The composition of the 1894 Land Commission and the physical character of the Gwaai and Shangani reserves — the absence of surface water over most of Gwaai for nine months of the year, and the tsetse infestation of Shangani — follow the published work on Zimbabwe's land history, including the survey literature on the colonial land commissions and the doctoral work on land reform that reproduces the Colonial Office file references. The 1912 figures for the principal land-owning companies, and the observation that over

six million of their acres lay within twenty-five miles of the rail, are from Victor Machingaidze's study of Company rule and agricultural development. The account of the Native Purchase Areas and of the competitive pressure from African tenant production that preceded the 1930 Act draws on recent work on property rights and labour relations in Southern Rhodesia. Ian Phimister's economic and social history stands behind the account of the Company's financial position.

One caution. The land figures in this module come overwhelmingly from official sources — commissions, Hansard, company reports — and official land figures in a settler colony are a record of what was allocated on paper, not of what was occupied, watered, or worked. The 45,000 acres acquired by Africans by 1926 is a registry figure and is probably reliable. The forty-nine million acres of European Area is a legal category and includes very large quantities of ground that no European ever set foot on. Where the two are set against each other, as they are in Olivier's arithmetic and in the title of this module, the comparison is between two legal quantities and not between two farms.

NOT EXACTLY THE QUEEN'S WORDS

The legitimating story — who it was told to, who it was never told to, and what happened when the House of Commons was handed the truth while the shooting was still going on

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Three audiences, two of them measured

A conquest of this kind has to be explained to people, and the people it has to be explained to are not the people it is done to.

There were three audiences for the story of what happened north of the Limpopo. The first was in London: investors who had to be induced to buy shares, ministers who had to be induced to grant a charter, churchmen and philanthropists and readers of the illustrated papers who had to be given a reason to approve. The second was in the country itself: the men who had taken farms, and their children, who needed to know what they were doing there. The third was the Shona and the Ndebele.

Almost everything that was written, printed, spoken in Parliament, carved in granite or taught in schools between 1889 and 1970 was aimed at the first two. For the third, there was effectively nothing. No civic story was offered to the conquered, no account of the Company's right that they were expected to accept, no attempt to make them believe that what had happened to them was legitimate. They were told what the tax was and where the boundary ran. This is not an oversight in the record; it is the record's most consistent feature, and it is the thing this module is finally about.

What the paper said and what the King was told

The document from which everything else descends was signed at Bulawayo on 30 October 1888. In the English in which it was written, the Rudd Concession granted Charles Rudd, Rochfort Maguire and Francis Thompson complete and exclusive

charge over all metals and minerals in Lobengula's kingdom, against £100 a month, a thousand rifles with a hundred thousand rounds, and a gunboat on the Zambezi.

What was said aloud in the king's presence was not what was on the paper, and we have this from the man who did the translating. Charles Helm of the London Missionary Society, at Hope Fountain, who had known the court for years and whom Lobengula trusted, later stated that Rudd had made oral promises not in the written document — that they would not bring more than ten white men to work in his country, that they would not dig anywhere near towns, and that they and their people would abide by the laws of his country and in fact be his people.

In fact be his people. That is the arrangement Lobengula believed he was making: a small licensed party of foreigners, under his law, in a place of his choosing, in exchange for guns.

Nor is the discrepancy something later historians dug out. Rudd himself put it in writing five weeks afterwards. On 5 December 1888 he sent a copy of the concession to the Cape government under a covering letter containing the words:

> Besides what appears on the face of the agreement, certain verbal undertakings were given by the King to me; for instance, that any white miners engaged in the country by me should be bound to fight in defence of the country if called upon.

The concessionaire is telling a colonial government, in a document, that the agreement he is submitting is not the whole of what was agreed. That sentence sat in a Blue Book for five years before anyone read it aloud in Parliament.

Lobengula acted the moment he understood. He sent two indunas, Mshete and Babayane, to the Cape and then to England, with instructions — recorded in the Blue Book — to establish first whether such a place as England existed, second whether there was such a person as the Queen, and if so to put a letter before her and ask her advice. The letter says:

> Some time ago a party of white men came into my country, the principal one appearing to be a man named Rudd. They asked me for a place where they could dig for gold, and said they would give me certain things for the right to do so. I told them to bring it to me, and I would see what I would do. A document was read and presented to me for signature. I asked what it contained, and was told that in it were my words and the words of those men. I put my hand to it. About three months after I heard from other sources I had given the right to all the minerals in my country. I called a

> meeting of my Indunas and of the white men, and demanded a copy of the document. It was proved to me that I had signed away the right to minerals of the whole country to Rudd and his friends. I have since had a meeting of my Indunas, and they will not recognise the paper, as it contains neither my words nor the words of those who got it from me.

It is a plain, unanswerable account of a fraud, written by the man defrauded, addressed to the sovereign in whose name the fraud would shortly be ratified.

Not exactly the Queen's words

What came back is the most instructive sequence in the module, because the robe can be watched being cut, unpicked and recut inside a single correspondence.

The first reply, sent in the Queen's name on 26 March 1889, is honest. Lobengula is told distinctly that Englishmen who have gone to Matabeleland to dig for stones have not gone with the Queen's authority and that he should not believe any statement of theirs to that effect. He is advised not to grant concessions hastily, and told that it is not wise to put too much power into the hands of the men who come first. It ends with a sentence that would be quoted against the Crown for a century:

> A King gives a stranger an ox, not a whole herd of cattle.

Lobengula understood it exactly as written. In August 1889 he wrote back: *If the Queen hears that I have given away the whole country it is not so. I have no one in my country who knows how to write… I thank the Queen for the word which my messengers gave me by mouth, that the Queen says I am not to let anyone dig for gold in my country except to dig for me as my servants.*

Two months later, in October 1889, the charter was granted without further communication with him. And then a second message went out in the Queen's name — the same Colonial Office, the same signature — reversing the first:

> The Queen, therefore, approves of the concession made by Lobengula to some white men, who were represented in his country by Messrs. Rudd, Maguire, and Thompson. The Queen has caused inquiry to be made respecting these persons, and is satisfied that they are men who will fulfil their undertakings, and who may be trusted to carry out the working for gold in the Chief's country without molesting his people, or in any way interfering with their kraals, gardens, or cattle.

Every clause of that undertaking would be broken, most of them within five years, and the cattle clause comprehensively.

And then, in a further despatch printed in the Blue Book of 1890, the department that had written both letters explained the difference between them. Lobengula was to be informed

> that the words about digging for gold in his country, which he says his messengers, Umsheti and Babyane, gave him, from the Queen, were not exactly the Queen's words, but that he will see from the Queen's last message that she meant much the same thing

The Colonial Office has conceded, in writing, that what the king was told the Queen said was not what the Queen said, and has attached to the concession the assurance that she meant much the same thing. When Labouchère read this out in the Commons he made the point that matters most: it was Knutsford, not Victoria, who wrote these letters, and *it was most unwise and undesirable to mix up the name of the Queen in those matters, that words such as he had read should be put into the mouth of Her Majesty, and that Her Majesty should be compromised thereby.* The sovereign's person was being used as an instrument of commercial persuasion in a foreign court, and the department knew it, and adjusted the wording afterwards.

The robe cut for London

The charter itself, granted 29 October 1889, states its own purposes in a single sentence of the petition it recites, and the order of the clauses is the order of the priorities:

> the condition of the natives inhabiting the said territories will be materially improved and their civilization advanced, and an organization established which will tend to the suppression of the slave trade in the said territories, and to the opening up of the said territories to the immigration of Europeans, and to the lawful trade and commerce of Our subjects and of other nations

Improvement, civilisation, the slave trade, European immigration, commerce. Four garments and the object, in that order, with the object last. The Crown responded that it was satisfied *that the intentions of the Petitioners are praiseworthy and deserve encouragement*.

Alongside the official robe ran the commercial one, and it was made of archaeology. The Great Zimbabwe ruins had been reported to Europe in 1871 by Karl Mauch as the

palace of the Queen of Sheba, and through 1890 and 1891 the newspapers ran the story that Mashonaland was the land of Ophir. Labouchère, who had spent two years attacking the Company in *Truth*, described the mechanism to the Commons: how the puffs appeared, how the public was told Mashonaland was Ophir, how he remembered an interesting statement being published to the effect that the Palace of the Queen of Sheba had been discovered there, and how the £1 shares reached £5 or £6. The ancient stone city was share-price material before it was anything else.

Then the religious robe, which was supplied on the ground and printed in *The Times*. The Reverend A. D. Sylvester, English chaplain at Fort Victoria, wrote on 12 September 1893 — six weeks before the invasion, and from the fort where Captain Lendy was stationed:

> The officials and Captain Lendy are as indefatigable as ever in their exertions for the good of the country and its inhabitants

and

> Everything is being done here on just principles, and we have the best of order; but we are determined to make a way for the spread of the glorious Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Lendy was the officer who had fired into a kraal over a small theft and killed twenty men, an act for which the Under-Secretary for the Colonies had told the House he had shown a culpable disregard of human life deserving of great censure. The chaplain also wrote, according to Labouchère, that it was the positive duty of the Company to enter Matabeleland and destroy the godless nation there. When this was read out, the seconder of the motion — J. E. Ellis, a Quaker — said he found it perfectly shocking and sickening that the spread of the Gospel should be mixed up with the name of Captain Lendy.

And finally the liberation robe, delivered in the House by James Rochfort Maguire — Member for West Clare, director of the Company, and one of the three men named on the Rudd Concession. Under his account, the Mashona had increased in numbers under Company protection and had been enabled to come out of their rocky fastnesses,

> where they lived more like kites than human beings

into the fertile land, where they were given protection, employment and the opportunity of earning a comfortable subsistence. The war was not a conquest but a rescue of one African people from another, undertaken reluctantly, at ruinous cost, by

men who wanted only to develop. He closed with the ledger: over a million pounds spent, a white colony settled, an ordered government established, a railway built, a telegraph erected, a new route opened from the east coast, £10,000 a year paid over to the imperial government — all of it, he said, *without costing the English taxpayer one single farthing*.

That is the metropolitan robe complete. Improvement, Christianity, the suppression of savagery, the rescue of the weaker native from the stronger, and development at no cost to the public. It is the same garment worn in every European capital in that decade, and there was nothing peculiarly Rhodesian about it.

Told, and proceeding anyway

What is peculiar — and what changes something in this framework — is what happened on 9 November 1893, when the House of Commons was told the truth in detail, at length, with documents, while the columns were still in the field.

Henry Labouchère moved the adjournment and spoke for the better part of an hour. He described how concessions were obtained from African monarchs: the monarch is asked to promise something in words, then it is reduced to writing, and the monarch who cannot read is asked to put his hand to it, with the result that he signs away a great deal more than he ever promised. He read Rudd's letter of 5 December 1888. He read Lobengula's letter to the Queen. He read Knutsford's three letters in sequence, including the admission about the Queen's words. He explained that the charter had been granted on a petition whose acceptability had turned, in Knutsford's own phrase, on the personnel of the directorate, and that two dukes had accordingly been recruited who knew no more about South Africa than anybody else. He set out the finance: that the concessions had been sold to the Search Company for £92,200 and then, with the charter added, on to the Concessions Company for £4,000,000 — the promoters having valued the Crown's charter at rather more than £3,900,000. He named the shareholders and their holdings. He stated that the Company had spent all its capital, was living on loans from De Beers, and that there was only one possible thing to do, which was to seize Matabeleland. He noted that the volunteers had been offered six thousand acres and gold claims. He said the battle was not a battle: *He should rather call it a battue or a massacre.* He asked what had become of the wounded, and asked it twice. He observed that a tenth of the Ndebele fighting strength had been destroyed in what he called this so-called march of civilisation.

Almost every one of those statements is now accepted history.

The reply came from Sydney Buxton, Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and it is worth attending to because it is the seam's actual mechanism, spoken aloud. On the substance of the fraud he did not deny it; he said the objections were

> all old stories. They were discussed, decided, and disposed of long ago; and if there was misconduct on the part of the Chartered Company, that misconduct had, at any rate, been condoned.

On the concealment of the Company's arrangement with the Concessions Company, he conceded that had the Colonial Office known, it would have modified the terms of the charter — and then observed that it would not have prevented the charter being granted. On the killing, when Labouchère interjected the single word "Maxim guns!", he replied that Maxims do not always make victory certain, and that if there had been a massacre on one side there might have been a greater massacre on the other. On the future he offered the standard undertaking: that this war was not to degenerate into a war of extermination or expulsion, but that

> the hateful military system that has existed for so long in Matabeleland must be broken down.

The motion was talked out. The government had, by its own account, been overborne. The Quakers' memorial to the Prime Minister — which said in terms that it was a disgrace to the nation's profession of Christianity that the settlement of colonists in uncivilised lands had been accompanied by wars of extermination — is on the record too, and changed nothing.

Nothing about this was hidden. It was printed, debated, indexed and bound. The metropole was told, and the metropole's answer was that it was too late to be told.

The robe cut for the settler

The second garment was made more slowly and it was made of granite.

Rhodes chose his own grave in 1896, standing on a hill in the Matopos during the negotiations with the indunas, and directed that the bones of Allan Wilson and the Shangani patrol be brought from Fort Victoria and placed near it. His will set out the request:

> I admire the grandeur and loneliness of the Matopos in Rhodesia and therefore I desire to be buried in the Matopos on the hill which I used to visit and which I called a 'View of the World'

He was buried there on 10 April 1902. The men of the Shangani patrol were moved there in 1904 and put under a granite monument with four bronze panels, carrying an inscription that is a small masterpiece of the form:

> Erected to the enduring memory of Allan Wilson and his men who fell in fight against the Matabele on the Shangani River, December 4th, 1893. There was no survivor.

Thirty-four men out of the eight to fifteen thousand who died in those two wars have the monument, and the monument's last sentence is the one every Rhodesian schoolchild learned. And the hill is called Malindidzimu, which is the dwelling place of the spirits: the founder of the colony arranged to be buried on sacred ground in the middle of the range whose caves held the shrines of the high god, and the arrangement is usually described in the literature as a happy choice because the site was held in veneration.

Around this the settler calendar assembled. The twelfth of September, the date the flag went up at Fort Salisbury in 1890, became the country's founding anniversary, marked by a descendant of the Pioneer Column raising the Union flag. The word "Pioneer" did the same work in Rhodesia that "Founding Father" does in the United States: it converted a paid expedition, hired for farms and claims by a company that could not meet a payroll, into a generation of ancestors.

The stones

The load-bearing article of the settler faith, however, was the one about the ruins, and its history is the single clearest thing in this study.

Karl Mauch decided in 1871 that Great Zimbabwe was Phoenician, having chipped a piece of a lintel, thought it smelled like his pencil, and concluded it was Lebanese cedar. Theodore Bent, digging there in 1891 at Rhodes's expense, reported a Semitic origin and complained that the names of Solomon and Sheba were on everybody's lips. From that point the proposition that Africans had not built the stone city became an article of Rhodesian belief, and it survived every excavation that disproved it — David Randall-MacIver in 1905, Gertrude Caton-Thompson in 1929, and the radiocarbon dating that followed.

What it survived by, in the end, was law. In 1970 the government of Rhodesia imposed censorship preventing official publications from stating as a fact that Great Zimbabwe had been built by Africans. Guidebooks, museum displays, school textbooks, radio

programmes and films were vetted. Peter Garlake, the country's Senior Inspector of Monuments and the leading authority on the site, left the country in 1970 rather than comply, and did not return until 1981. A colleague later described being warned by the director of the museums service to be careful with the press, and being told by a member of the Board of Trustees that he would lose his job if he said publicly that black people had built it — that it was permissible to attribute it to *the yellow people*, but the radiocarbon dates could not be mentioned. He compared the position of his discipline to Germany in the thirties.

Now consider who this was for.

The Shona knew who had built Great Zimbabwe. Their own traditions attached to the site; their mediums were associated with it; nothing about the censorship was calculated to change a single African mind, and no attempt was made to argue the point with Africans, because Africans were not the audience. The prohibition was aimed at guidebooks, museums and school syllabuses — that is, at the settlers' own children and at foreign visitors. A state was employing its censors, in the second half of the twentieth century, to protect its own population from an archaeological fact.

And the reason is exact. If Africans had built a stone city of that scale in the twelfth century, then the settler was not bringing civilisation to a country that had never had it; he was occupying the ruins of somebody else's. The whole edifice of improvement, tutelage and development rests on the proposition that there was nothing there, and there was demonstrably something there, and it was seven hundred acres of dressed stone with a conical tower.

What was offered to the conquered

Against all of that, set what was offered to the Shona and the Ndebele by way of a reason to accept the arrangement.

There was a Native Department, which collected the hut tax, registered labourers and enforced the pass. There were chiefs, who were retained where they were useful and replaced where they were not, and who were put on small salaries and made answerable to a native commissioner — a transformation from a man who held authority from an ancestor to a man who held it from a district office. There was the mission, which taught reading and preached, and which was doing so on its own account and for its own purposes rather than the state's. And there was, for the great majority, an education system so slight that it will need its own module.

There was no story. Nobody explained to the Ndebele why the Company was entitled to their cattle, or to the Shona why a chartered mining concern had become the government. There was no Rhodesian equivalent of the French *mission civilisatrice* preached at the conquered as a civic identity they might one day enter, and no serious attempt — as there was in some other colonies — to construct an account of the colonial order in which the colonised had a place worth wanting. The 1898 franchise, on a common roll with a property qualification, was formally open and functionally shut, and nobody went into the reserves to urge people to qualify for it.

The conquered were policed, taxed, moved and employed. They were not persuaded, because persuading them was not necessary and would have cost money, and because the arrangement's actual defence was that it could not be beaten.

Reading the robe against the framework

Three audiences; two were addressed; the third was not an audience at all. The prediction that a colonial legitimating story is cut for the metropole rather than the conquered is confirmed here in the strongest available form, which is not that the conquered got an inferior version but that they got none. Everything in the record — the charter's recitals, the Ophir puffs, the chaplain's letter to *The Times*, Maguire's kites, the granite at Malindidzimu, the censored guidebooks — is addressed to Londoners or to settlers. Nothing is addressed to a Ndebele or a Shona with the object of making him think the order was right. Where a conqueror needs the belief of the conquered, he argues with them; where he does not, he does not bother, and the absence of argument is a measurement of how little their consent was worth to the arrangement.

The seam is not ignorance, and this is a revision. This collection has generally treated the gap between metropole and colony as an information problem — the metropole believes the robe because it cannot see the ground. Southern Rhodesia will not support that reading. On 9 November 1893, with the war still in progress, the House of Commons was told by name and with documents that the concession had been obtained by trickery, that the Company was bankrupt and had gone to war to avoid bankruptcy, that its promoters had sold a piece of paper worth £92,200 for £4,000,000 on the strength of the Crown's charter, that the volunteers were being paid in the enemy's land, and that two thousand people had been killed against two. The government's answer was that these were old stories which had been condoned. What holds the seam shut is not concealment but sequence: by the time an accusation becomes admissible it has also become historical, and the machinery it describes has

already been built, staffed, paid for and defended in public by men who cannot now unsay it. A robe does not need to be believed. It needs to have been believed *at the moment of decision*, after which the decision defends itself. Knowledge arrives; the ratchet does not turn back.

The settler robe's load-bearing lie was told to the settler about himself, and defended by the state against its own scholars. The Great Zimbabwe censorship of 1970 is the purest instance in this collection of a legitimating story whose entire function is internal. It converted the settler's arrival from an intrusion into a restoration, and it was enforced not against the conquered — who knew better and were never argued with — but against museum labels and school textbooks in the conquerors' own language. When a state censors archaeology, it is telling you which population's belief it actually runs on. That population was fifty thousand strong in 1930 and about a quarter of a million at its peak, and it was the only population whose conviction the order ever needed.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from public-domain primary texts. The recitals of the Royal Charter of 29 October 1889 are quoted from the text as published in the *London Gazette* of 20 December 1889 and reproduced online. All of the following are quoted exactly from Hansard, HC Deb 9 November 1893, vol 18, cc543–627, where they were read into the record during the debate on Mr Labouchère's motion for the adjournment: Rudd's covering letter of 5 December 1888 acknowledging verbal undertakings; Lobengula's letter to Queen Victoria; the three communications sent in the Queen's name by Lord Knutsford, including the ox and the herd, the approval of the concession, and the admission that the words given to the king were "not exactly the Queen's words"; Lobengula's letter of 10 August 1889; the Reverend A. D. Sylvester's letter to *The Times* of 12 September 1893; Mr Maguire's speech, including the phrase about living more like kites than human beings and the development ledger; the memorial of the Society of Friends; and Mr Buxton's replies, including the statement that the misconduct had been condoned. Because these documents are quoted in Hansard from the Blue Books rather than from the originals, the wording is at one remove from the manuscripts, and where a transcription question arises the Blue Book is the better authority. Charles Helm's account of the oral promises made to Lobengula — that no more than ten white men would come, that they would not dig near towns, and that they would abide by the king's law and in fact be his people — is quoted as reproduced in the documentary literature; Helm was a participant with an interest and his statement is late.

Rhodes's will is quoted as reproduced in the standard accounts. The inscription on the Allan Wilson memorial is given as it stands on the monument in the Matopos.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited, and one modern testimony is quoted in a single short phrase. The account of the 1970 censorship of Rhodesian archaeology, of Peter Garlake's departure and of the vetting of guidebooks, museum displays and school textbooks follows the published survey literature on censorship in Rhodesia and the obituary and appraisal literature on

Garlake; the recollection of a Board of Trustees member permitting attribution to "the yellow people" while forbidding mention of radiocarbon dates is from a modern published interview and is quoted only in that phrase, the rest being paraphrased. The excavation history — Randall-MacIver in 1905, Caton-Thompson in 1929 — is standard and is not in dispute.

Two cautions. First, the phrase most often attributed to Lobengula about England as a chameleon stalking a fly is widely repeated and its provenance is not secure; it is not used here. Second, this module rests very heavily on a single parliamentary debate, and a parliamentary debate is an adversarial proceeding. Labouchère was a partisan, a proprietor of a campaigning journal, and not a disinterested witness; several of his financial figures were contested at the time and the Company's defenders were entitled to answer them. What is not in doubt, because it is in the same columns, is that the allegations were made in full, that the documents were read into the record, and that the government's response was not to deny them but to say that the matter had been disposed of. That is the point the module rests on, and it does not depend on Labouchère being right about the share arithmetic.

RAISING THE MASS EVER SO LITTLE

Formation — what the settler child was given, what was deliberately not built for anybody else, and why the men who eventually took the country had to leave it to be educated

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Two systems, one of which was not a system

In 1902 the government of Southern Rhodesia opened its first school, at Plumtree, for the children of settlers. In 1946 it opened its first secondary school for Africans, at Goromonzi. Forty-four years separate those two dates, and in the interval the settler system acquired compulsory attendance, state funding, a network of boarding schools built on the English public-school model, and an examination pathway to British universities, while African education remained overwhelmingly the business of missionary societies operating on subscriptions and grants that were never adequate and were never meant to be.

That is the headline, and it is unsurprising. The question worth asking is a narrower one, because it is the question on which colonies genuinely differ. Every conquering power has to decide whether to educate a thin stratum of the conquered — chiefs' sons, clerks, interpreters, minor officials — to run the machinery it cannot staff itself. Some do it lavishly. Southern Rhodesia did not merely fail to do it. It considered the proposition, wrote it down, and rejected it in terms.

What the settler child was given

The European system was built early and built to a template. Plumtree opened in 1902; by the 1920s the colony had a network of schools whose founders and headmasters imported wholesale the values and institutions of the British ruling-class public school — houses, prefects, cadet corps, chapel, Speech Day. The historian of the European system, R. J. Challiss, working through the National Archives files, found that

substantial revenues from the Rhodesian government, from private funds and from the imperial government were all directed into white education, and that the ethos which developed in those schools was markedly militaristic and jingoistic, organised around Empire loyalty and the maintenance of settler supremacy. He also found something more directly material: that the construction and maintenance of the European system depended on African labour and on revenue raised from Africans.

In 1930 — the same year as the Land Apportionment Act — a Compulsory Education Act made schooling compulsory for European children. Free, compulsory and universal within its own population, at a moment when the majority population's schooling was being provided in one- and two-teacher village schools run by missions. As late as 1943, fifty-four per cent of primary schools in the colony were run by a single person and another thirty-four per cent by two.

The purpose of the European system was stated by the Prime Minister without embarrassment, because there was no reason for embarrassment: he was addressing his own electorate about their own children. Godfrey Huggins, in a speech on 30 March 1938:

> This is essential if our children are to be given equal opportunity for progress and keep their position of influence and power. It will prevent the creation of a poor white class. Constant adjustment will take place and the result should be a system of education Rhodesian in character, and essentially suited to our own requirements.

Two objects, and the second is the interesting one. Education was to keep the settler children in their position of influence and power, *and* to prevent a poor white class from forming. Those are the same object seen from two ends. A white man who fell out of the bottom of the settler economy would land among Africans doing African work at African rates, which would demonstrate to everybody that the racial division of the economy was a division of law rather than of nature. The European school system existed in part to prevent that demonstration.

The road that was considered and refused

The other system had its founding document in 1920, and it is the answer to the question about chiefs' sons.

Herbert S. Keigwin, a native commissioner, was appointed Director of Native Development and submitted a report to the Legislative Council on the suggested

industrial development of natives. Its governing principle was stated in a single sentence:

> The policy of raising the mass ever so little is infinitely preferred to any scheme for the advancement of the few.

Read that against what other colonial administrations were doing in the same decade. In Buganda the sons of chiefs were being put through mission and government schools precisely to produce the few — a literate, salaried, administrative stratum through which the protectorate would be governed. In Northern Nigeria the same. In French territories, an *école des fils de chefs* and a small évolué class, formed thinly but formed on purpose. Everywhere the metropole lacked men on the ground, it manufactured a native elite because it had to.

Southern Rhodesia was the case that did not have to. There were settlers, and settlers needed jobs. Every clerkship, every foremanship, every position in the administration that an educated African might have filled was a position a settler's son was going to fill, and forming Africans for those posts would have meant creating competitors for the electorate's own children — the precise thing Huggins would name in 1938 as the thing education existed to prevent. The chiefs'-sons model is therefore not a matter of colonial philosophy or of imperial generosity. It is a function of whether there is a settler population that needs the work. Where there is, the ladder is not built; where there is not, it is built out of necessity and then resented.

Keigwin's formula also does something cleverer than simple refusal. *Raising the mass ever so little* is not a policy of leaving Africans alone. It is a positive programme of doing something for everybody, at a level so shallow that nobody emerges — and it is presented as the democratic alternative to missionary elitism, as a rebuke to bookish education for the few in favour of practical education for the many. The most restrictive policy in the colony's history arrived dressed as the more generous one.

Domboshawa and Tjolotjo

What Keigwin built were two government industrial and farm schools: Domboshawa in Mashonaland in 1920 and Tjolotjo in Matabeleland in 1921. Their curriculum was agriculture, building in *pisé de terre*, carpentry, and the training of demonstrators who would return to the reserves and improve village methods. In 1925 Domboshawa had 187 pupils and Tjolotjo 76, of whom thirteen and six respectively were demonstrators in training.

The pupils' response is the part of the record most often passed over, and it should not be. Both schools had clashes over what constituted a good education. Where the conditions or the curriculum were considered inadequate, students complained, left, or went on strike. The demand from below was for book learning — for the academic curriculum that led to a certificate and a profession — and the supply from above was carpentry and manuring. The idea that Africans wanted practical rather than literary education, on which Keigwin's whole scheme was founded, was contradicted by the people it was founded on within five years of its founding.

The scheme did not last. The Hadfield Commission of 1924 doubted Keigwin's suitability to run it; he resigned in 1926 and the Native Development Department collapsed shortly after. What survived were the two schools, which is to say that after six years of official effort the state's entire direct provision for the education of some three-quarters of a million people was two industrial schools with fewer than three hundred pupils between them.

Ten years later, in 1935, a new academic master arrived at Domboshawa and found among his colleagues Cephas Hlabangana and Gideon Mhlanga, who were the first two Africans in the country to have been awarded university degrees. Two. In 1937 he moved to Tjolotjo, where the upper primary classes still depended on teachers imported from South Africa — three Xhosa, a Zulu and two from Bechuanaland — because the colony had not produced any of its own.

The problem is not educating him

The clearest statement of the settler dilemma came in 1923 from a writer named Wilson, and it is worth quoting because it concedes the whole game in two sentences:

> The problem before us is not that of educating the native: it is to know what to do with him when we have educated him

He goes on to say that Africans are being educated and will be educated, and cannot possibly be prevented from acquiring a knowledge of European arts and crafts even if all native schools were forbidden. The difficulty is not supply. It is what the product is going to do on Monday morning.

Eleven years later the legislature answered that question by statute. The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 was passed, on the record, partly in response to a strike by European building workers who felt threatened with replacement by African labour. Its

operative provision was a definition. An "employee" was any person engaged by an employer to perform work — *but shall not include a native*.

The consequences ran through the whole economy. Only employees could be parties to collective bargaining; only employees could be apprenticed. White trade unions and white employers formed industrial councils and made agreements binding on the trade, from which non-employees — that is, Africans — were excluded by definition. An African could not enter a skilled trade because the route into it ran through an apprenticeship for which he was not eligible, and he was not eligible because he was not, in law, a person engaged to perform work.

This is the same architecture as the land clause of 1898 and it is worth naming as such. The Act does not say that an African may not be a bricklayer. It says he is not an employee. There is no prohibition to point to and no discrimination on the face of the instrument, merely a definition that empties the category. And it made the education question moot: a state that has closed the skilled trades by statute does not need to argue about whether to teach carpentry, because it has already arranged that carpentry will lead nowhere.

The power that was not used

The imperial government had a reserved power for exactly this. Under the Southern Rhodesia Constitution Letters Patent, any law whereby natives might be subjected to conditions, disabilities or restrictions to which persons of European descent were not also subject had to be reserved for His Majesty's assent. The Act of 1934 was drafted so as not to come into force until the Governor proclaimed that it was His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow it.

On 20 February 1935 the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs was asked in the Commons whether, given that he might withhold assent to legislation enforcing disability or discrimination on the ground of race, any advice had been tendered to His Majesty about disallowing the Rhodesian Act on the ground that natives were excluded from its scope. Malcolm MacDonald replied:

> The Southern Rhodesia Industrial Conciliation Act, 1934, contained provision that it should not come into operation unless and until the Governor had declared by Proclamation in the Gazette that it was His Majesty's pleasure not to disallow the Act. After careful consideration of the terms of the Act, as passed by the Legislature of Southern Rhodesia, I informed the Governor on the 12th June last that His Majesty would not be

> advised to exercise his power of disallowance. A Proclamation was accordingly issued by the Acting Governor bringing the Act into operation as from the 20th July, 1934.

After careful consideration. The safeguard was inspected, applied to the Act, and found to permit it.

Ten years later the loop closed. In October 1945 a member asked what responsibility Britain still retained for safeguarding Africans in Southern Rhodesia against racial discrimination, referring to a discriminatory agreement entered into by the building industry to the prejudice of African workers. The reply set out the reserved power over *laws*, and then added:

> Individual agreements made under the provisions of the Southern Rhodesia Industrial Conciliation Act do not require the approval of the Secretary of State.

The imperial safeguard covered statutes. The exclusion was worked by agreements made under a statute that had already been allowed. That is not an oversight; that is what a definition clause is for.

The pyramid and the rider

Godfrey Huggins became Prime Minister in 1933 and held the office for twenty years, serving simultaneously as Secretary for Native Affairs until 1949. His stated doctrine was the two-pyramid policy: separate development, with Africans rising to the apex of their own pyramid, which stood alongside and beneath the European one — an African at the top of his pyramid being, in the formulation, barely the equal of a European at the bottom of the other. Later, under Federation, the doctrine was rebranded as partnership, and Huggins supplied the gloss himself: the partnership of the rider and the horse.

Under that doctrine the numbers moved, and they moved slowly enough to be counted individually.

Goromonzi opened in 1946, the first African school in the country preparing pupils for the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate. Before it, what secondary schooling existed was oriented to South African examinations. The average age of the first Form One was eighteen and a half — young men who had waited years for a place to exist. Huggins, opening the school, gave it as his opinion that Goromonzi would meet the country's need for African secondary education for as far ahead as he could then visualise. The

second such school, Fletcher, opened at Gwelo in 1957. In 1952 there was still no secondary school at all for Coloured and Asian children, and one for Africans.

By 1968 there were six African secondary schools, two of which offered Advanced Level. Around two per cent of African children entered Form One. Anyone wanting a university education had, until the late 1950s, to leave the country; girls wanting nurse training went to Durban, and those wanting medicine to Natal. When the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland took its first African students in 1960, one of them wrote back to Goromonzi to report that the school's old boys there numbered about twenty souls out of a total black student population of about forty-nine.

Forty-nine African university students, in a country of over three million people, seventy years after the Pioneer Column.

What the missions did, and what came of it

Into that vacuum went the missions, and it is important to be accurate about their motives, which were their own. They taught to convert. Reading was for the Bible; the schools were instruments of a church, not of a state, and the state's relation to them was to grant them a little money and to complain periodically that they produced too much book learning and too little industry. The Methodist school at Waddilove, the American Board at Mount Selinda and Dadaya, the Jesuits at Kutama, the Anglicans at St Augustine's Penhalonga, the Dutch Reformed at Morgenster — these did the work the state had declined to do, badly resourced, and they did it for a purpose that had nothing to do with staffing an administration.

And they produced, without intending to, the men who eventually took the country.

Robert Mugabe was a Shona boy from Kutama, educated by the Jesuits and the Marist Brothers, qualified as a teacher in the mid-1940s, taught in mission and government schools, and in 1949 won a scholarship to Fort Hare in South Africa — where he took a BA in history and English in 1952, joined the ANC, and met the men who would run half the liberation movements in southern Africa. Joshua Nkomo did a carpentry course at Tjolotjo — Keigwin's school — became a driver, then a carpentry teacher, and at twenty-five decided he would have to go to South Africa to get any further. He finished his high school diploma at Adams College in Natal, sitting in desks built for children, and took his qualification at the Jan Hofmeyr School of Social Work in Johannesburg in 1952. Herbert Chitepo, an orphan raised by Anglican priests at St Augustine's, went to Adams College, then Fort Hare, then to London for the law, and

came back as the first African advocate in the country. Ndabaningi Sithole came out of the American Board mission schools.

Every one of them was formed outside the state, and most of them outside the country. The pattern is not incidental. A state that provides no secondary schooling and no university does not thereby prevent the formation of an educated class; it exports the site of formation to somewhere it cannot supervise. Fort Hare and Adams College were where the future leadership of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, Bechuanaland and South Africa met each other, compared notes, and joined the same organisations.

And in 1962 Stanlake Samkange — himself mission-educated, from a family of Methodist ministers — opened Nyatsime College, the first technical college in the country specifically for African students, having begun raising the money in 1951. He modelled it on Tuskegee, and the president of Tuskegee came out for the dedication. Africans in Southern Rhodesia founded their own technical college, on an American Negro model, because after seventy years there was not one.

Reading formation against the framework

Whether a native administrative elite gets formed is not a question of colonial philosophy. It is a question of whether settlers need the jobs. This is the module's central finding and it answers a question the collection has been circling. Where a metropole rules without a substantial settler population, it must manufacture a stratum of the conquered to staff its administration — chiefs' sons, clerks, interpreters — because the work will not otherwise get done, and that manufactured stratum then becomes the order's most durable partner and, eventually, its most dangerous critic. Where a settler population exists, those same posts are the settlers' livelihood and their children's prospects, and forming Africans for them means manufacturing competitors for one's own electorate. Keigwin stated the resulting policy in 1920 in a single sentence, and Huggins stated the reason in 1938 in another. The presence of settlers is the variable; the rest is commentary.

Withholding formation is only half the mechanism. The other half is removing the destination. A colony that merely under-educates can be argued with; the answer to under-education is more schools. Southern Rhodesia foreclosed the argument in advance by defining an African out of the category of employee in 1934, which closed apprenticeship and the skilled trades by definition rather than by prohibition. The technique is identical to the land clause of 1898 — no bar on the face of the instrument,

merely a category that does not contain him — and its effect is to make the education question academic. This is worth carrying forward as a general point: where an order withholds formation, look for the statute that makes formation useless, because the two are usually built together and the second one is the load-bearing member.

And the withholding did not prevent a counter-elite. It exported one, and got it back radicalised. The men who ended the colony were not peasants and were not products of the reserves. They were mission-educated schoolteachers and a carpenter who went to South Africa because there was nowhere at home to go, met each other and the ANC at Adams College and Fort Hare, and came home with degrees and no chair to sit in. That is a thwarted near-elite in the exact technical sense — formed, credentialled, and structurally denied the positions their formation pointed at — and the colony manufactured it by the same act with which it tried to prevent it. What the settler order could not do was prevent the education from happening at all; what it could do, and did, was ensure that when it happened it happened somewhere beyond the reach of a Rhodesian native commissioner, in the company of every other movement in southern Africa.

Wilson had put the problem correctly in 1923. The difficulty was never educating him. It was knowing what to do with him afterwards, and the answer the colony gave — nothing, and by statute — determined who would be standing at Lancaster House fifty-six years later.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from public-domain primary texts, with two exceptions noted below. Keigwin's principle — that raising the mass ever so little is infinitely preferred to any scheme for the advancement of the few — is from his *Report on the Suggested Industrial Development of Natives*, Southern Rhodesia Sessional Papers A.7 of 1920, and is quoted as reproduced in the modern historiography rather than from the sessional paper itself. The exchange of 20 February 1935 on the Industrial Conciliation Act, including the question about the power of disallowance and Malcolm MacDonald's reply, and the exchange of 29 October 1945 on the building industry agreement, including the statement that individual agreements made under the Act do not require the approval of the Secretary of State, are quoted from Hansard. The operative definition in section 4 of the Southern Rhodesia Industrial Conciliation Act, 1934 — that "employee" means any person engaged by an employer to perform work but shall not include a native — is given as reproduced in the legal and historical literature; I have not read the enrolled Act and the exact wording of the exclusion should be checked against it before the phrase is relied on as a quotation.

Two quotations are at one remove and are flagged. Godfrey Huggins's speech of 30 March 1938 is quoted as reproduced by Aeneas Chigwedere and repeated in the Zimbabwean press; I have not traced it to a contemporary report, and the bracketed gloss usually printed within it has been omitted here. The 1923 formulation attributed to Wilson — that the problem is not educating the native but

knowing what to do with him afterwards — is quoted from its reproduction in the scholarly literature on Rhodesian educational policy; the underlying work is cited there as Wilson (1923) and I have not seen it.

Figures are given as stated in the sources and several are approximate. Domboshawa's 187 pupils and Tjolotjo's 76 in 1925, with thirteen and six demonstrators in training respectively, are from the archival research reproduced in the Zimbabwean educational literature. The proportion of single- and two-teacher primary schools in 1943 is from Frankema's comparative work on African education, which excludes Southern Rhodesia from its expenditure series for want of data — a gap worth stating, since it means the frequently repeated claim that African education received about a tenth of European provision rests on later and less firm sources, including a United Nations committee statement of 1973, and is not used here as a precise figure. The counts of African secondary schools in 1952 and 1968, and the proportions of African children entering Form One and O-Level, are from Zimbabwean educational scholarship and are consistent across accounts but are not independently verified here.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: R. J. Challiss on the European educational system and its dependence on African revenue and labour; Kedmon Hungwe on race, education and class; the recent work on the African school curriculum as historical text for the Keigwin schools, the Hadfield Commission and the Huggins period; Michael West on the rise of an African middle class, from which Keigwin's report is quoted; and the Phelps-Stokes literature on adapted education. The biographical details of Mugabe, Nkomo, Chitepo and Sithole are drawn from standard reference sources; where accounts differ — as they do on whether Nkomo's Jan Hofmeyr qualification of 1952 was a degree or a diploma — the discrepancy is noted rather than resolved.

One caution about the shape of this module. The record of what was refused is much fuller than the record of what was wanted, because the refusals were written by officials who kept files and the wanting was done by people who did not. The evidence that African pupils at Domboshawa and Tjolotjo demanded academic rather than industrial education comes to us through complaints recorded by the staff they were complaining about. It is good evidence, and it is the only evidence there is.

GAMBLERS, LOAFERS AND THIEVES

The cost column — what it was made to cost an African to live, move, work and stop working, why the price kept rising for seventy years, and the one increase that broke the arithmetic

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The question

Why does a man who is being robbed get up in the morning and go to work for the man robbing him?

Usually because the alternatives have been made worse, and because the arrangement, having been there since before he was born, has stopped looking like an arrangement and started looking like the weather. Where that second condition holds, very little force is required; the order maintains itself on the conviction of the people inside it, and the police are for criminals rather than for the population.

Southern Rhodesia never achieved the second condition and never seriously tried, as the previous module showed. What it had instead was the first, built deliberately, statute by statute, over seventy years — an apparatus whose function was to make every alternative to working for a settler worse than working for a settler, and to make not working an offence. This module is an inventory of that apparatus and of what it cost to run, and it ends with the moment somebody in Salisbury raised the price one increment too far.

The price of existing

The first charge was the tax, and it arrived before anything else. A hut tax of ten shillings was authorised under the Matabeleland Order in Council of 1894 and levied from that year, later supplemented by a poll tax and by an additional charge for each wife beyond the first. To this the Company added, on the strength of owning the country, a rent of £1 a head a year on Africans living on land it had not yet alienated — a charge on top of

the tax, for the privilege of remaining where they already were. When Lord Olivier described that £1 to the House of Lords in 1926 he added the obvious gloss: for a native, a considerable sum.

Set that against the earnings available. On the gold mines, monthly wages averaged around twenty shillings in 1935 and rose to somewhere near thirty shillings by the 1940s. On the farms they were lower: an average of about fourteen shillings a month in 1932.

So a farm labourer in 1932 owed, in tax and rent, something approaching two months' wages a year before he had eaten anything. That is the arithmetic, and its purpose is not revenue — it never raised very much revenue — but conversion. Before the tax, an African household could live on its own grain and cattle and had no use for shillings. After the tax, it needed shillings annually and could not get them from its own production, because the land it had been left could not produce a surplus for sale and because, as the following modules will show, the marketing arrangements were designed to ensure it could not. The tax manufactured the need for a wage. The wage was set by the people who had also written the tax.

The price of moving

The second charge was on movement, and it produced the largest single body of criminal convictions in the colony.

Africans were required to carry documents — a registration certificate, the *situpa*, together with passes for travel, for seeking work and for residence in urban areas. The system predated the Natives Registration Act of 1936 and was consolidated by it. The Act was presented to the imperial Parliament as a rationalisation that would *reduce* the volume of prosecutions, which the Southern Rhodesian government said it found disturbing. Its stated purpose, in the Chief Native Commissioner's report for 1936, was to prevent gamblers, loafers and thieves from gathering in urban centres and to check the influx of young women who evaded parental control.

Members at Westminster were sceptical, and the record permits us to see who was right. Asked in the Commons on 27 February 1940 for the figures, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs reported that convictions for contraventions of the pass laws, including offences under the registration legislation, had fallen from 16,568 in 1936 to 13,273 in 1938, the first full year in which the new Act was in force.

Sixteen and a half thousand convictions in a single year, in a country whose African population was then something over a million, for offences that consist entirely of being in a place without the right piece of paper. Thirteen thousand two hundred and seventy-three after the reform. These are not crimes in any sense a person could have recognised before 1890; they are the administrative cost of a system that needed to know where every African man was at all times, expressed as a criminal docket.

The phrase in the Chief Native Commissioner's report deserves to be kept, because it is the whole robe of the cost column in six words. *Gamblers, loafers and thieves.* The document that authorises the surveillance of an entire population describes its object as the exclusion of a handful of undesirables — and then produces convictions at a rate of forty-five a day.

The price of stopping work

The third charge fell on leaving. Under masters and servants legislation of the kind current throughout southern Africa, breach of a contract of employment by a servant was a criminal offence, and so were desertion, insolence, drunkenness and negligence. A man who walked off a farm because the wages were not paid could be arrested, convicted and returned.

The asymmetry is the point, and Charles van Onselen documented it in the mining industry with some care. Cases of employers withholding wages were often settled out of court by compound inspectors and never reached a magistrate at all; where they did, magistrates were extremely reluctant to sentence mine owners, and it was common practice to postpone sentence until the employer had been given time to pay. Prosecutions were slow enough that a worker might wait two years to recover money owed him. When sentences came they were light: fines between five shillings and two pounds in 1914–15, and no heavier later. When the owner of one mine was prosecuted after a nine-month delay for owing over a thousand pounds in wages to more than a hundred and twenty men, he was fined two shillings on each count.

Two shillings a count for withholding a man's pay; a criminal conviction for the man who leaves because it has not been paid. That is not a legal system with a bias in it. That is a labour-supply mechanism with a courthouse attached.

The compound

Where the ordinary pressures were insufficient, there was recruitment, and in the first decades it was recruitment in a sense that the word only barely covers. Van Onselen's study of the mines between 1900 and 1933 gives the period from 1900 to 1912 the plain title of the dominance of forced labour: chiefs required to produce men, native commissioners applying pressure, and a recruiting organisation, the Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau, drawing men from Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Mozambique and delivering them to compounds under contract. The word the workers used for the whole system, *chibaro*, is the one van Onselen took for his title, and he treats it as denoting something close to slavery.

The compounds killed people at a rate that was recorded and tolerated. Men arrived from a thousand miles away, worked underground, contracted silicosis and tuberculosis, and were discharged sick; a significant number died on the mines or on the way home, and their dependants rarely received anything. By 1944 an estimated twenty-one thousand Nyasa were working in Southern Rhodesia, about thirty per cent of the mine workforce — a proportion that tells you the local population had learned to avoid the mines, and that the industry's answer was to import men who had not yet learned.

The price of having no work at all

Finally, the net beneath the whole structure. There were vagrancy provisions under which a man who was unemployed could be arrested for being unable to maintain himself — described in the Commons in 1960 in exactly those terms, alongside territorial mobilisation and the military occupation of African townships.

Assemble the five elements and the design becomes visible. A tax creates an annual requirement for cash. Land policy ensures the cash cannot be earned by farming. A pass system controls where a man may go to earn it and criminalises being in the wrong place. Masters and servants law criminalises leaving the job once he has it. Vagrancy law criminalises not having one. Each statute closes an exit. Together they do not form a wall around a prison; they form a funnel, and the wide end is the reserve and the narrow end is a European farm or a mine compound.

That distinction matters more than it sounds. A wall is built to stop people getting out and can be relaxed when nobody wants to leave. A funnel has to be maintained permanently at full pressure, because the moment any of the five statutes lapses, the

labour goes home. An order of this design cannot become cheaper over time even if it wishes to, because the coercion is not a security measure — it is the labour supply.

The one increase too many

For sixty years the arrangement held, and it held because there was a floor under it. The reserve was overcrowded, badly watered and getting worse, but a man had a claim on land there through his lineage, and he could go out to work for two years and come back to it. It was a poor floor. It was a floor.

The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 removed it.

The Act was presented as modernisation — described by its authors as a five-year plan that would revolutionise African agriculture in the reserves — and it did four things at once. It replaced communal tenure with individual farming rights. It based those rights on actual occupation, which disqualified the very large number of young men who were away working. It capped holdings, in many areas at around ten acres. And it enforced destocking, compulsory reduction of cattle to what the land was reckoned to carry.

Consider each from inside. The chief lost his power to allocate land, which was the substance of his authority. The migrant worker discovered that the years he had spent earning the cash to pay the tax had cost him his claim to the ground he intended to return to. The stock owner watched his cattle — which were not an asset but the whole of his wealth, his marriages, his standing and his insurance — reduced by order of a district officer. And a man now had either a small registered plot or nothing at all, with no urban housing, pension or security of any kind on the other side if it was nothing.

The state had spent sixty years pushing men off the land and into wage labour, and had left them, throughout, a place to stand. In 1951 it took the place to stand away, and did so in the name of improving their farming.

The consequences were immediate and were noticed at the time by the people who benefited from them. From 1957 the African National Congress, and after it the National Democratic Party and ZAPU, used the Land Husbandry legislation as their principal organising instrument in the rural areas. George Nyandoro's verdict on the Act is the single most economical sentence in this study:

> It was the best recruiter Congress ever had.

The Act was effectively abandoned in 1962, eleven years after it was passed, having created a landless rural population, wrecked the standing of the chiefs the

administration relied on, and handed the nationalist movement a grievance that reached every village in the country. It was not repealed because it was unjust. It was repealed because it had become unenforceable.

The tell

What the state did next is the part of the record that settles the question this module opened with.

A state of emergency was declared in February 1959; the African nationalist organisations were banned and hundreds of their leaders imprisoned. In 1960 the legislature passed the Emergency Powers Act, which allowed the government to detain any person whose detention appeared to the Minister to be expedient in the public interest, and to restrict people to designated areas — a power used to confine men in places remote enough to constitute detention under another name. In the same year it passed the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, which curtailed speech, assembly, association and movement, and gave the police wide powers of arrest and detention.

Sir Robert Tredgold, Chief Justice of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, resigned rather than administer it. His statement is worth quoting at length because it is a judge of that order describing that order:

> The Bill outrages almost every basic human right and is, in addition, an unwarranted invasion by the Executive of the sphere of the courts. These are the custodians of individual rights and are my special responsibility.

He described the Bill as savage, mean and dirty, and said it would remove any lingering vestige of doubt whether Southern Rhodesia could properly be called a police state. The *Rhodesia Herald* carried it under the headline that the Chief Justice had quit and that the Bill outraged basic rights.

Now hold two facts together. In 1960 Southern Rhodesia was at the height of its prosperity — tobacco booming, secondary industry expanding, white immigration running strongly, the Federation intact, the country regarded in London as the most advanced territory in central Africa. And in that year it built the legal architecture of a police state, and its own Chief Justice said so in public and walked out.

Seventy years after the flag went up at Fort Salisbury, the arrangement required more coercion than it had at the beginning, not less. There is no version of the story in which the belief was taking hold and the apparatus could be relaxed. The apparatus grew every decade: hut tax 1894, masters and servants and pass regulations from the earliest years,

forced recruitment to 1933, registration 1936, exclusion from the labour law 1934, land husbandry 1951, emergency 1959, detention and public order 1960. The line runs one way.

Reading the cost column against the framework

The cost did not fall over time. It rose, and it rose fastest when the colony was most prosperous. This collection has generally expected the coercive expenditure of a conquest to be front-loaded — heavy at the founding, tapering as the arrangement becomes ordinary. Southern Rhodesia inverts that expectation completely, and the inversion is dateable. The two largest expansions of the machinery came in 1936–38, in the middle of a stable decade, and in 1959–60, at the peak of the boom. An order whose subjects were coming to accept it would not need to write the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act in its most successful year. That it did is not evidence of panic; it is evidence that the arrangement had never at any point been running on anything but pressure, and that the pressure had to be increased as the population became more numerous, more urban and more literate.

The coercion was not a security system. It was the labour supply, which is why it could not be reduced. The five statutes — tax, land, pass, masters and servants, vagrancy — do not deter rebellion; they close exits. A man is made to need cash, prevented from earning it by farming, directed to where he may earn it, prevented from leaving once there, and criminalised if he has no employer at all. This is a funnel and not a wall, and the significance for the framework is that a funnel cannot be dismantled incrementally. Relax the tax and the labour stays home; relax the pass and it moves to the towns; relax masters and servants and it walks off the farms at harvest. An order built this way is structurally incapable of moving toward cheapness, whatever its rulers may come to believe, because the coercion *is* the economy rather than the guard on it. That is a stronger claim than the collection has made before and this case supports it.

And the ruled will absorb enormous costs indefinitely, provided one thing is left untouched. This is the finding I would carry furthest. For six decades Africans in Southern Rhodesia paid a tax equal to a substantial fraction of a year's wages, carried papers, went to prison at a rate of forty-odd convictions a day for paper offences, worked under criminal contracts, and did not rise. What they had was a residual: a claim on land in the reserve, held through kinship, that a man could go back to. It was a bad residual and it was shrinking, and it was enough. In 1951 the state took it, in the name of improving it — individual title, ten acres, no claim for the absent, cattle culled by

order — and within six years the calculation had inverted across the entire rural population and the nationalist movement had its organisers in every district.

The lesson is not that there is a threshold of total misery beyond which people revolt; the totals were already appalling and had been for fifty years. It is that the arithmetic is done at the margin, on the last thing a man has left, and that an order can raise the general burden almost without limit so long as it does not touch the residual that makes the burden survivable. Nyandoro understood this perfectly and said so in eight words. The men who drafted the Native Land Husbandry Act believed they were doing agricultural policy.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from public-domain primary texts and from parliamentary proceedings. The pass-law conviction figures — 16,568 in 1936 falling to 13,273 in 1938 — and the account of the Natives Registration Act of 1936 having been presented as a measure to reduce convictions are from Hansard, HC Deb 27 February 1940, together with the earlier exchanges of 21 July 1936 and 4 May 1937 in which the stated purpose of the Act was quoted from the Chief Native Commissioner's report for 1936: to prevent gamblers, loafers and thieves from gathering in urban centres and to check the influx of young women evading parental control. The reference to vagrancy provisions permitting the arrest of the unemployed for being unable to maintain themselves, and to the military occupation of African townships, is quoted from the debate on the Address, HC Deb 3 November 1960. Sir Robert Tredgold's resignation statement is quoted as read into Hansard on 3 November 1960 and 8 November 1967 and as reported in the *Rhodesia Herald*; the several published versions differ slightly in wording — "the sphere of the courts" and "the sphere of the Judiciary" both appear — and the version given here follows the fuller newspaper text. His further descriptions of the Bill as savage, mean and dirty, and as removing any lingering vestige of doubt whether the colony could be called a police state, are quoted as reproduced in the parliamentary record and in contemporary pamphlet literature respectively, the latter at one remove. George Nyandoro's remark that the Land Husbandry Act was the best recruiter Congress ever had is quoted as reproduced in the Rhodesian documentary literature; it is a recollection reported later, not a contemporary record.

Figures are approximate where the sources are approximate. Monthly wages of about twenty shillings on the gold mines in 1935, rising toward thirty shillings in the 1940s, and about fourteen shillings a month for farm workers in 1932, are given following the figures reproduced from Ian Phimister's economic and social history; wage series for this period vary by industry, region and whether rations are counted, and these should be read as orders of magnitude. The hut tax of ten shillings from 1894 and the £1 per head rent charged on unalienated land are as given in Module 2's sources. The estimate of twenty-one thousand Nyasa workers constituting about thirty per cent of the mine workforce by 1944 is from the recent scholarship on labour recruitment in British Central Africa. The ten-acre cap under the Native Land Husbandry Act varied by district and soil classification and is given here as typical rather than universal.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited. Charles van Onselen's *Chibaro: African Mine Labour in Southern Rhodesia, 1900–1933* stands behind the account of forced recruitment, the compound system and the treatment of wage-withholding cases in the magistrates' courts, including

the fines of two shillings a count; the detail is his and the argument that chibaro approached slavery is his. Ian Phimister's economic and social history underlies the wage material. The account of the Native Land Husbandry Act and its effects draws on the substantial literature on that Act, including William Duggan on the rural African middle class, and the recent local studies of the Rhodesdale evictions and of resistance in Gokwe, which is where the detail about migrant workers losing their claims and about cultivation beyond the acreage limit comes from.

Two cautions. First, the masters and servants provisions described here are given in general terms because the Southern Rhodesian legislation of this family, and its amendment history, has not been checked here against the enrolled statutes; the criminalisation of desertion and insolence was standard across the region and is well attested for Southern Rhodesia, but a reader wanting to quote a section number should go to the ordinances. Second, and more importantly: almost every number in this module was generated by the apparatus it describes. Convictions were counted because convicting was the business; wages were recorded because they were paid; the dead in the compounds were counted only where an inspector was required to count them. There is no series anywhere in the archive recording how many people paid the tax by selling a beast they needed, or how many marriages did not happen because the cattle were gone. The cost column as it survives is the portion of the cost that somebody in an office had a reason to write down.

BUYING BACK THEIR OWN GRAIN

Extraction — what was taken, by which instrument, and the discovery that the money did not go to London at all

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

Where the money went, and where it did not

The standard picture of a colony is a pipe: wealth is pumped out of the ground at one end and arrives in the metropole at the other, and the difference between the two ends is the profit of empire. That picture is not useless, but it does not describe Southern Rhodesia, and the way it fails is the most interesting thing in this module.

The British South Africa Company, which conquered the country in order to mine it, ran at a net loss for the entire period during which it governed. It paid no dividend to its shareholders until June 1924 — after its charter had ended and it had stopped ruling. Whatever was extracted from Southern Rhodesia between 1890 and 1923, it did not make the men in London rich, and the men in London knew it. What was extracted went a few hundred miles rather than six thousand: out of the reserves and into the European farm, by statute, in a series of Acts that named the two populations and set them different prices for the same commodity.

This module follows the money.

The Company's books

The financial record of Company rule is one of chronic deficit. The police force cost around £200,000 to establish and roughly £150,000 a year to maintain. The war of 1893 cost £119,954. The risings of 1896–97 cost a great deal more and required an imperial rescue. Across the whole span from 1890 to 1913 the operation ran at a net loss; in 1913 alone the shortfall was £100,213, on revenue of £784,573 against

expenditure of £884,786. Brief administrative surpluses appeared between 1909 and 1912, totalling some £316,100, and that was the best of it.

The gold that had been the object never arrived in Witwatersrand quantities. The reefs were narrow, deep and low-grade; the industry that developed was one of small workers and moderate outputs rather than a second Rand, and it was supplemented from the 1920s by asbestos and chrome. There was money in Rhodesian mining, but it was made by mining companies, not by the chartered company that owned the royalty.

So how did the shareholders eventually get paid? Not by extraction. By compensation.

The Privy Council held in 1918 that the unalienated land belonged to the Crown, and the settlement of the early 1920s transferred the Crown lands to the Southern Rhodesian government against a payment of £2 million, within a larger settlement usually given at £3,750,000 together with relief on the accumulated administrative debt. The Company kept its mineral rights in Southern Rhodesia until the settler government bought them out in 1933. In Northern Rhodesia it kept its mineral rights until 1964, drawing royalties on Copperbelt copper for forty years after it had ceased to govern anything, and surrendering them on the eve of Zambian independence only under threat of expropriation.

That is the actual financial logic of a chartered conquest, and it is worth stating plainly because it is not the logic anybody advertised. Seize the ground; hold it long enough to establish a legal claim; govern at a loss while the claim ripens; lose the ownership case if you must, because the state that beats you in court will then have to buy you out; and collect from the successor government, which will pay because it needs a clean title. The Company's return came from three buy-outs spread across forty years, and the last and largest of them was paid by an African government.

Who paid for the government

Meanwhile somebody had to fund the administration, and a large share of it was funded by the population that received almost nothing from it.

In 1903–4 the total revenue of Southern Rhodesia was about £435,000, of which nearly £130,000 was raised from Africans through direct taxes and customs. Something close to a third of the state's income, from a population with no vote, no representation in the Legislative Council, two industrial schools, and no claim on any of the services the money bought.

The hut tax was not designed as a revenue instrument — its designers said so, and its principal function was to manufacture wage labour — but once levied it was revenue, and it was spent on roads, telegraphs, police and a European school system whose beneficiaries were the people who had voted for the tax. The arrangement is worth naming for what it is: a substantial fraction of the colonial state was built with money taken from Africans and spent on settlers, and this is visible in the published accounts within thirteen years of the conquest.

Buying back their own grain

The sharpest extractive instrument in the colony's history, however, was not a tax. It was a marketing board.

African cultivators had been growing and selling maize since the 1890s, and in the early decades they were good at it — close enough to the mines and the new towns to undercut settler farmers who had capital, credit and railway access but higher costs. The settler answer came in stages: the Land Bank Act of 1912, which made state agricultural credit available on terms Africans could not reach; the European Produce Act of 1920; and finally the Maize Control Act of 1931 with its amendment of 1934.

The mechanism was a state Control Board through which maize had to be sold. The Board maintained two pools. Grain sold into the protected domestic market received a fixed local price, which was high. Grain sold for export received world parity, which in the 1930s was very low. Participation in the profitable local pool was allocated by quota, and the quota system was constructed so that European growers took the great bulk of the local allocation while African growers were pushed toward the export pool. The result, over the 1930s and 1940s, was that African producers received a price averaging something on the order of twenty to thirty per cent below the supported price paid to European growers for the identical commodity.

There is no need to characterise this. A question put to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in the Commons on 16 April 1935 characterises it:

> whether he is aware that the Government of Southern Rhodesia has fostered maize-growing by the native population and afterwards, in the middle of the season, has, by its Maize Control Act, made it impossible for them to sell at ordinary market rates, so that they have been buying back their own grain at a higher price per bag than that at which they had sold it

Growers, having been encouraged into the crop, delivered it into a controlled market at a low price, and then in the hungry months bought grain back at the protected price. The transfer went from the poorest producers in the country to the best-capitalised.

Malcolm MacDonald's answer is the seam again, in miniature:

> My right hon. Friend has no information to confirm the view that the effect of the Act has been as suggested by my hon. Friend, but he is arranging for inquiries to be made.

He was not the only person raising it. At the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference of 1934, Father Baker of the Community of the Resurrection put the point in a single connected sentence: the land legislation was driving Africans from their ancestral lands, and the position was made worse by controlling the price of maize produced by one segment of the population — namely the natives.

The historian who has worked most closely on the Board's minutes gave his study a subtitle that states the finding without adornment: maize control in Southern Rhodesia as the African contribution to white survival. The white farming sector came through the Depression. It came through partly on money taken from African growers at the point of sale.

Threepence a head

The companion measure of 1934 was the Cattle Levy Act, which imposed a levy on cattle sold by African owners and exempted European owners from it. The Missionary Conference recorded its disapproval of the imposition of a levy of threepence a head on native-owned cattle.

Threepence is a small sum and that is the point of it. A levy set low enough to be unremarkable, applied to every beast sold by one race and not by the other, does two things at once: it transfers money, and it moves the margin. An African who could formerly undersell a settler at the same quality now could not, and the difference had been created by statute rather than by any fact about the cattle.

Taken together — a two-price maize market, a one-sided cattle levy, state credit available to one population only, and marketing controls that pushed African produce toward the low pool — this is a machinery for eliminating a competitor rather than for exploiting a subject. The African cultivator was not being taxed because he was poor; he was being priced down because he was good, and because the settler farmer, who had a vote, could not meet him on level terms.

The wage

The other channel was labour, and the scale of it is set out in Module 5: mine wages of around twenty shillings a month in 1935 rising toward thirty in the 1940s, farm wages of about fourteen shillings a month in 1932, against white wages in the same industries running perhaps ten to twenty times higher. That differential was not a market outcome. It was held in place by the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, which defined an African out of the category of "employee" and thereby out of collective bargaining and apprenticeship, and by the whole apparatus of tax, pass and vagrancy law that ensured a continuous supply of men who had to work at whatever was offered.

The wage gap is the largest single transfer in the colony's history and it is the one with no document attached, because it was accomplished by not writing anything down. There is no Act fixing African wages low. There is an Act removing every mechanism by which they might have risen.

Reading extraction against the framework

The pipe did not run to the metropole. It ran across the district. This is the module's principal finding and it requires the collection to modify an assumption. In the studies of non-settler colonies, the extractive relationship runs outward: revenue, crops and minerals move from the colony to the imperial centre, and the local elite are commission agents. Here the chartered company that conquered the country lost money for thirty-three years, paid its first dividend after it stopped governing, and eventually made its shareholders whole through three government buy-outs. The wealth that was actually transferred moved a few hundred miles, from African producers to European producers, and it moved by legislation passed in Salisbury by a parliament elected on a settler franchise. In a settler colony the extraction is internal, and the metropole may be, in strict cash terms, close to a bystander.

Which means the Company's real business was the claim, not the ore. Seize ground, govern it at a loss for long enough to convert conquest into legal title, and collect when a successor government buys the title out. The BSAC did this three times — Crown lands in 1923, Southern Rhodesian mineral rights in 1933, Northern Rhodesian mineral rights in 1964 — and the last payment came from a state about to become independent under an African government. A conquest that never turned a trading profit nonetheless returned a fortune, and the returns were paid by the taxpayers of the conquered country, in instalments, over three-quarters of a century.

And the most efficient caste-sorted extraction operates through price, not seizure. A hut tax is visible, resented, and produces convictions. A cattle raid produces a rising. A marketing board produces neither. The African grower takes his maize to the depot, is paid, is given a receipt, and goes home with twenty to thirty per cent less than a European grower received for the identical bag — and there is no confiscation to point at, no official to blame, and no moment at which anything is taken from him. Over the two decades in which those Acts operated, that mechanism moved more value than any tax in the colony's history, and it moved it in the direction that mattered most politically, which was toward the marginal white farmer who could not otherwise have survived and who voted. When examining an order of this kind, the instrument to look for is not the tax schedule. It is the marketing board, the quota and the grading standard — the places where a price is set by people who are also sellers.

The 1935 question put it in one image and no analysis improves on it. They grew the grain, they sold the grain at the price the Board allowed, and then they bought it back at more than they had been paid for it.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from public-domain sources. The parliamentary question of 16 April 1935 about the effect of the Maize Control Act, and Malcolm MacDonald's reply that no information confirmed it and that inquiries were being arranged, are quoted from Hansard. Father Baker's remarks and the Conference's resolution disapproving the levy of threepence a head on native-owned cattle are quoted as recorded in the published proceedings of the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference of 1934 and reproduced in the recent scholarship on that body; the minutes are the Conference's own record of its own debate and should be read as such.

Figures are given as the sources give them and several deserve caution. The Company's financial position — roughly £200,000 to establish the police and £150,000 a year to maintain it, £119,954 for the 1893 campaign, a net loss across 1890 to 1913, a shortfall of £100,213 in 1913 on revenue of £784,573 against expenditure of £884,786, administrative surpluses of some £316,100 in 1909–12, and no shareholder dividend until June 1924 — is drawn from the compiled accounts of Company rule as reported in the recent secondary literature; I have not seen the annual reports. The 1903–4 revenue figures, £435,000 in total of which nearly £130,000 came from Africans, are as reproduced from Honest Elias Koke's study of the colony's fiscal system. The £2 million paid for the Crown lands in the 1923 settlement, and the larger figure of £3,750,000 usually given for the whole settlement, are reported in several places and are flagged in Module 2 as unverified against the settlement instrument. The differential of twenty to thirty per cent between the price received by African and European maize growers in the 1930s and 1940s is as given in the educational and historical literature; it is an average across years and districts and the actual gap varied considerably with the export price, the size of the local pool and the quota allocation, which changed almost annually. The threepence per head cattle levy is as recorded by the Missionary Conference; rates were altered subsequently.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited. Carl Keyter's study of maize control between 1931 and 1941 is the principal work on the Control Board's operation, and the reading of the two-pool system given here follows it and the associated literature; readers wanting the precise mechanics year by year should go to Keyter, since the quota arrangements were complex and were repeatedly redesigned. Oliver Pollack on black farmers and European politics, Giovanni Arrighi on the proletarianisation of the African peasantry, Ian Phimister's economic and social history, and Victor Machingaidze on agrarian change from above stand behind the account of the squeeze on African production. Robin Palmer's work on land and racial domination underlies the credit and marketing material.

One caution about what this module cannot show. The Maize Control Board's records tell us what was paid at the depot. They do not tell us what was grown and eaten and never sold, or what was sold outside the controlled channels, and the small-grains literature suggests that a good deal of African production moved through sorghum, millet and rapoko precisely because those crops were outside the maize control machinery. The transfer measured here is the transfer that passed through a state instrument and was therefore recorded. The portion of African agricultural output that simply ceased to be worth growing for sale leaves no entry anywhere.

ALARM, FEAR, OR DESPONDENCY

Information and suppression — seventy-five years in which nothing needed hiding from London, and the month in which the censor arrived to protect the settler from his own newspaper

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The column that stayed empty

Anyone coming to this material expecting to find a colonial administration working to keep the truth from the imperial public will find, for the first three-quarters of a century, almost nothing to look at. Not because the truth was flattering. Because it was published.

Take the inventory of what London was told, in its own Parliament, in its own language, on the record.

On 9 November 1893, while the columns were still in the field, the House of Commons was informed that the concession on which the whole enterprise rested had been obtained by trickery; that the Company was bankrupt and had gone to war to avoid bankruptcy; that its promoters had sold a piece of paper worth £92,200 for £4,000,000 on the strength of the Crown's charter; that its volunteers were being paid in the enemy's land and cattle; and that about two thousand Ndebele had been killed against two white men. The government's reply was that these were old stories which had been condoned.

On 20 February 1935 the Commons was told that the Southern Rhodesian Industrial Conciliation Act excluded Africans from the definition of an employee, and asked whether the reserved power of disallowance would be used. The answer was that after careful consideration His Majesty would not be advised to exercise it.

On 16 April 1935 the Commons was told that African maize growers, having been encouraged into the crop, were being made to sell into a controlled market and then

buy grain back at more than they had been paid. The answer was that there was no information to confirm it and that inquiries were being arranged.

On 27 February 1940 the Commons was given the figures for pass-law convictions: 16,568 in 1936, 13,273 in 1938. The exchange that followed concerned whether the second figure represented an increase over the previous year.

On 23 June 1926 the House of Lords was told that the proposed division of the country would give each European a potential interest in land thirty-three and a half times that of each African, that three white men were being treated as able to use as much land as a hundred Africans, and that the Commission's own report had certified African consent to segregation with the qualification *in so far as they can grasp the subject*. The motion was withdrawn.

On 29 October 1945 the Commons was told of a discriminatory agreement in the building industry and reminded that the constitution reserved for the Crown's assent any law imposing on natives disabilities not imposed on Europeans. The answer was that individual agreements made under the Industrial Conciliation Act did not require the Secretary of State's approval.

That is a partial list from a single archive, and every item in it was printed, indexed, bound and sold. Nobody had to dig for any of it. The Blue Books were public documents; the debates were reported in the London press; the reports of the Chief Native Commissioner were laid on the table.

And here is the part that goes beyond mere inattention. Britain did not simply fail to notice. It had built, and retained for the whole period of responsible government, a specific instrument for exactly this: the Southern Rhodesia Constitution Letters Patent required that any law subjecting natives to conditions, disabilities or restrictions not applied to persons of European descent be reserved for the Crown's assent. It was a functioning safeguard. It was invoked. Members asked for it to be used. Officials considered the matter, in writing, and declined — and then, when the discrimination was worked through agreements made under a permitted statute rather than through the statute itself, replied that agreements were outside the safeguard's scope.

The check ran. It returned a pass. It was not evaded, and it was not deceived.

No language wall was necessary

In other colonies the seam is held by translation, or the lack of it: grievances published in a vernacular the administration never learned, or a colonial press free in the

metropolitan language and censored in the local one. Southern Rhodesia had no need of that arrangement at the metropolitan end, because there was no barrier to cross. The settlers were Englishmen; the legislature debated in English; the statutes were published in English; the parliamentary questions were asked in English by members who had read the Southern Rhodesian Government Gazette.

The facts about Southern Rhodesia were not in an obscure language, in a distant archive, or in private correspondence. They were in Hansard.

Where the censorship did point

Which is not to say there was no censorship. There was, and where it existed one should ask which way it faced.

It faced inward. The Law and Order (Maintenance) Act of 1960 and the Emergency Powers Act of the same year curtailed speech, assembly and movement, and gave the executive powers of detention and restriction — an apparatus built after the nationalist organisations had become mass movements and aimed squarely at them. The Federal Chief Justice resigned rather than administer it, and said in public that it removed any lingering doubt whether the country could be called a police state, and nothing followed from his saying so.

There was also an African press, and its fate is instructive. African Newspapers Limited, financed from South Africa, ran a group of papers for African readers from the 1940s; under Lawrence Vambe and later Nathan Shamuyarira the African Daily News in Salisbury became a lively and widely bought paper, and the successive governments of the colony never permitted the growth of newspapers run outright by nationalists. In 1964 the Rhodesian Front government banned the African Daily News outright.

Note the date. 1964 — a year before the settler rebellion, and thirty-one years after the Industrial Conciliation Act had been laid before the Crown without objection. The first newspaper suppressed in this country was the one read by Africans, and it was suppressed by a settler government that was still, in law, a British colony.

October 1965

Then the machinery arrived, and it arrived in a rush, and the date is the finding of this module.

In October 1965 a censorship order was pushed through the Southern Rhodesian parliament requiring newspapers to submit pre-publication proofs for approval. It was reinforced by a state of emergency declared in early November. The Unilateral Declaration of Independence followed on 11 November.

The censorship preceded the rebellion by a month.

The *Rhodesia Herald* and its stablemates — owned through the Rhodesian Printing and Publishing Company by the South African Argus group, and almost universally hostile to UDI — responded by printing the paper with the censored material removed and the space left white. Readers could see, column by column, how much had been taken out. The blank spaces became a daily feature of Rhodesian newspapers and remained one until censorship was formally lifted in April 1968.

An official South African broadcast defended the Rhodesian censorship at the time, and its reasoning is the most useful single sentence in the module. The Rhodesian press, it said, had clearly opposed Mr Smith's government in the face of the clearly expressed wishes of the electorate, and had at times adopted an attitude that could only be described as hostile; as to the blank spaces, the censored articles could only have been removed for one reason, namely that they were dangerous to Rhodesia.

The electorate there means the white electorate; there was no other. The press was being censored for disagreeing with the settlers.

Whose alarm

What followed over the next fifteen years was the fullest information apparatus this collection has encountered outside a wartime state, and every element of it was pointed at the population inside the country.

Legislation made it an offence to print statements likely to cause alarm, fear, or despondency among readers. An Official Secrets Act of 1970 criminalised the publication of classified material. The Law and Order (Maintenance) Act was amended to give the Joint Operations Command power to impose media blackouts at its discretion, a provision still in force at the general election of February 1980. D notices were issued. The Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation, a statutory body modelled on the BBC, and Rhodesia Television, majority-owned by Argus, were both brought under government control, and a Department of Information — later the Ministry of Information — was built into the machinery of the state, staffed in part by a wave of

arrivals from the international radical right, and tasked with remaking white political culture.

And there was a campaign of self-censorship conducted by sticker. Brightly coloured slogans were distributed to bars and restaurants across the country: *Your Tongue Could Pull a Trigger. Think about national security, don't talk about it. What You've Said May Blow Up a Truck. An Open Mouth Makes a Big Target.*

Read the statutory offence again and ask whose emotional state it protects. Alarm, fear, or despondency — among readers. The readers of the *Rhodesia Herald* were, overwhelmingly, white. Africans were not despondent about the news; they were living the news. The law is a provision for the management of settler morale, and it was necessary because the settler had to be kept in the country, in the reserve regiments, and in the tax base, and because a quarter of a million people cannot fight a war of that duration if a substantial number of them decide it is lost and take the road to Johannesburg.

The archaeology, once more

The purest case remains the one described in Module 3, and it belongs here as well.

In 1970 the government made it unlawful for official publications to state as a fact that Great Zimbabwe had been built by Africans. Guidebooks, museum displays, school textbooks, radio programmes and films were vetted. The Senior Inspector of Monuments left the country rather than comply. A colleague was warned that he would lose his job if he said publicly that black people had built the site, and told that attributing it to *the yellow people* was permissible provided the radiocarbon dates were not mentioned.

There is no version of this aimed at Africans. The Shona knew who had built it, and no attempt was made to argue the point with them. The censorship covered guidebooks, museums and school syllabuses — that is, settler children and foreign visitors. A state was spending public money to protect its own electorate from a fact about a ruin.

Which is what censorship in this country was always for, once there was any.

What Britain did act on

The last section is the test, and Southern Rhodesia supplies something rare: a control.

For seventy-five years the facts of the dispossession were public in Britain, discussed in Parliament, and produced nothing — no disallowance, no commission of inquiry with teeth, no change of policy. Land divided thirty-three to one; a franchise open in form and shut in fact; sixteen thousand convictions a year for paper offences; a marketing board taking a third of the price of a bag of maize; a statute excluding a whole population from the meaning of the word *employee*. All known. All tolerated.

On 11 November 1965 about two hundred thousand settlers, through a government they had elected, repudiated the authority of the Crown.

Britain acted within days. Exchange controls, an embargo, expulsion from the sterling area; the United Nations encouraged voluntary sanctions from November 1965 and made them mandatory from December 1966; a naval patrol was stationed off Beira; the Royal Navy, the Foreign Office and successive Prime Ministers spent the next fourteen years on the problem, ending at Lancaster House in 1979.

Nothing had changed on the ground. No new fact about Africans had come to light; the Land Apportionment Act was thirty-five years old and the Industrial Conciliation Act thirty-one. What had changed was that the injury was now to Parliament rather than to a Shona cultivator, and Parliament could feel it.

The disclosure had never been the variable. The variable was where the bill landed.

Reading information against the framework

The empty column is confirmed for 1890 to 1964, and in a harder form than the framework paper states it. That paper's finding is that colonial regimes did not conceal from their metropoles because inattention was free, and that the metropolitan check kept returning *pass* while checking the wrong population. Southern Rhodesia supplies the stronger version: here there was a *purpose-built* check, written into the constitution specifically to catch racially discriminatory legislation, and it was invoked, considered and refused in writing — twice that we have quoted, on the Industrial Conciliation Act in 1935 and on the building-industry agreements in 1945. This is not a mechanism that failed for want of information. It is a mechanism that received the information, examined it against its own criterion, and passed it. An order does not need to deceive an inspector who inspects and approves.

The new finding is a date: October 1965. The framework paper predicts that censorship intensity measures the threshold of the audience whose consent the order actually runs on, and that no regime buys suppression where inattention is free.

Southern Rhodesia lets us watch that rule operate through a change of audience. For seventy-five years the order ran on the consent of a metropole that did not care, and there was no censorship pointed homeward, because none was needed. In 1964 the settler government banned the African newspaper — the first suppression, and it faced inward, exactly as the paper predicts colonial censorship does. And then in October 1965, in the weeks before the rebellion, the settler government began censoring its own English-language press, and went on to build over the following decade an apparatus of secrecy, blackout, prosecution and morale management as thorough as anything in the collection.

What changed in that month was not the brutality and not the facts. It was that the order stopped running on London's consent and started running on the settler's, and the settler was a constituency that could act — by emigrating, by refusing to serve, by voting the government out. The moment a population's belief becomes load-bearing, the censor is hired. The corollary is worth stating for use elsewhere: **an order's censorship apparatus is a live readout of which population it currently depends on, and when the dependency shifts the apparatus shifts with it within weeks.**

And the blank space is a measurement. The *Rhodesia Herald* left the censored columns white so that its readers could see how much had been removed. That is a protest which only functions if the readers matter, and the readers were settlers. Africans did not get blank spaces in their newspaper; in 1964 they got no newspaper. Two forms of suppression, two populations, and the difference between them tells you precisely whose opinion the government of Rhodesia thought it had to answer for. The newspaper's own compositors made the assessment daily, in white ink, on the front page.

The falsification test, run and not met. The framework paper offers to be broken by a case in which a liberal metropole halted an atrocity in its periphery on the strength of exposure alone, with no cost transferred to a domestic constituency. Southern Rhodesia is the opposite of that case, and unusually clean because the two halves are separated by a single date. Identical conduct, publicly known for three-quarters of a century, produced no action whatever while it cost Britain nothing. A constitutional rebellion by the conduct's beneficiaries, which cost Britain its standing in Parliament, at the United Nations and in the Commonwealth, produced sanctions within days and fifteen years of sustained effort.

Seeing was free. Being defied was not.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from public-domain parliamentary proceedings and are given as they appear in Hansard: the debate of 9 November 1893; the exchange of 20 February 1935 on the disallowance of the Industrial Conciliation Act; the question of 16 April 1935 on the Maize Control Act; the debate of 23 June 1926 in the Lords; the question of 27 February 1940 on pass-law convictions; and the exchange of 29 October 1945 on the building-industry agreement and the scope of the reserved power. Sir Robert Tredgold's statement on the Law and Order (Maintenance) Bill is quoted as read into Hansard and as reported in the *Rhodesia Herald*; the several versions differ slightly in wording and this is noted in Module 5. The statutory offence of publishing matter likely to cause alarm, fear, or despondency is given as the phrase is reproduced in the reference literature on Rhodesian media law; I have not checked it against the enrolled statute and the exact section should be verified before the words are relied on as a quotation. The self-censorship slogans are quoted as reproduced in the published account of Rhodesian psychological operations, which cites the Ministry of Information's own material; they are at one remove. The South African broadcast defending Rhodesian censorship is quoted as reproduced in the O'Malley archive's chronology of the South African press.

Dates and sequences are given as the sources give them and one deserves particular care. The censorship order requiring pre-publication proofs is dated to October 1965 in the recent scholarship on Rhodesian information policy, ahead of the state of emergency in early November and UDI on 11 November; readers should be aware that the emergency powers and the censorship order interlock and that different accounts date the effective start of censorship variously between October and mid-November. Nothing in the argument depends on more precision than "in the weeks before the declaration." The banning of the African Daily News is dated 1964 and is the subject of Eugene Wason's account, published in 1976. The formal lifting of press censorship in April 1968, and the retention of the Joint Operations Command's blackout power under the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act through to the election of February 1980, are as given in the reference literature.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: the recent work on Rhodesia's Department of Information and its transformation of white political culture after UDI, from which the account of the RBC, Rhodesia Television and the influx of radical-right personnel is drawn; the media history of African Newspapers Limited, from which the account of the African press, Lawrence Vambe and Nathan Shamuyarira comes; and the work on news silence in Zimbabwe that takes the blank spaces as its starting point. The account of the 1970 archaeological censorship follows the sources given in Module 3.

Two cautions. First, this module argues in part from absence — from the fact that no substantial apparatus of concealment aimed at Britain can be found before 1965. Absence of evidence is weak evidence, and it is possible that such an apparatus existed and left no trace. What can be said positively is stronger and is what the argument actually rests on: that a very large number of damaging facts demonstrably *were* published in Britain, in official form, and demonstrably produced no consequence, and that the constitutional safeguard designed to catch them was invoked and declined in writing. Second, the post-1965 material is the least settled part of this study. Rhodesia after UDI was an unrecognised state at war, its own records were incomplete and in places deliberately destroyed, and the scholarship on its information operations is recent and still moving. What is offered here is the shape of the thing, which is clear enough, rather than a full inventory.

THEN IT'S THE DONKEY

Elite coordination — how a settler population that agreed on almost nothing held the same arrangement for seventy years without ever deciding to, and what it did to the one man who broke ranks

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The thing to be explained

It is tempting to write about "the settlers" as though they were a bloc with a common mind, and the temptation should be resisted, because the sources will not support it and because resisting it is the only way to see what actually held the country together.

The people inside the Rhodesian arrangement disliked each other, competed with each other, sued each other, and voted each other out of office. A chartered company in London whose interest was a share price; land syndicates holding millions of unworked acres along the railway; mining houses wanting a cheap and constant labour supply; tobacco and maize farmers wanting land, price support and workers who would not be bid away by the mines; white artisans and railwaymen whose entire economic position depended on keeping Africans out of the trades, and who were therefore the natural enemies of every employer in the country; a commercial and professional establishment in Salisbury and Bulawayo with metropolitan manners and metropolitan connections; an imperial government that wanted the territory held and did not want to pay for it; and, from 1910, a South African state that would have preferred to absorb the whole thing.

None of these wanted the same things. Several of them wanted opposite things. And for seventy years they produced, without ever convening to agree it, an arrangement of remarkable consistency in which every one of them was better off than under any available alternative, and which none of them would break.

That is the phenomenon. This module is about the mechanism.

They really did not like each other

Begin with the evidence that the conflicts were genuine, because the story is worthless if the factions were only pretending to disagree.

In October 1922 the white electorate of Southern Rhodesia — fewer than thirty-five thousand people among something like eight hundred and fifty thousand Africans — was asked to choose between responsible government and joining the Union of South Africa. The British government preferred union. The South African government wanted it, and Smuts had offered generous terms: parliamentary representation and financial advantages. The Chartered Company preferred union. Every large interest outside the colony was on the same side.

The settlers voted the other way: 8,774 for responsible government against 5,989 for the Union — fifty-nine per cent to forty-one.

Read what the Responsible Government Association had argued, because it is an inventory of positional interests rather than a national idea. Salisbury would be able to keep out poor whites. It would control its own immigration policy and exclude undesirables. Railway workers would be treated fairly. The mining laws would be preserved. The country would have full access to its African labour supplies. Money, education and the women's franchise would stay in local hands. Not one of those is a statement about nationhood. Every one is a statement by somebody about his own position, and together they carried a referendum against the combined preference of two governments and a chartered company.

The pattern repeats. The settler government, having got its own parliament, proceeded to buy the Company out of the mineral rights in 1933 — the successor extracting from the founder. In December 1962 the Rhodesian Front, the party of the small farmer, the artisan and the small-town man, defeated the United Federal Party of the Salisbury establishment by thirty-five seats to twenty-nine. The men who had built the colony's institutions were turned out by the men who worked its farms and its workshops. That is a real class conflict inside a population of a quarter of a million, and it produced the government that took the country out of the Empire.

And every quarrel was settled the same way

Now look at how the conflicts were resolved, because the resolutions are the mechanism.

The sharpest of them was between white wage-earners and their employers. In the early 1930s European building workers struck because they were being replaced by cheaper African labour. This is the classic confrontation of an industrial economy and it could have gone in any of several directions: a general wage settlement, a closed shop, arbitration, or defeat.

What it produced was the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, and the settlement it embodies is worth setting out slowly. An "employee" was defined as any person engaged by an employer to perform work — but not to include a native. Only employees could bargain collectively; only employees could be apprenticed. White unions and white employers then formed industrial councils and made agreements binding on their trades, from which non-employees were excluded by definition.

Count what each party got. The white artisan got a permanent ceiling over the head of every African in the country, which was worth more to him than any wage rise. The employer got a workforce below that ceiling which could not strike, could not organise, could not bargain, and could not be poached upward. The farmer got the same, and got it in a form that kept the mines from bidding his labour away with skilled wages. The state got industrial peace in the only sector capable of disrupting it. And the imperial government, asked to disallow the Act under a reserved power written for exactly this purpose, considered the matter and declined.

Nobody in that settlement had to agree with anybody about anything, except on the one point that Africans should be outside the category. Each party defended its own position; the defences converged; and the convergence produced a statute that none of them would ever have reason to repeal, because repealing it would cost every one of them something different and immediate.

The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 has the same structure. The land companies kept their millions of unworked acres. The small farmer got statutory protection from African competition for ground. The mining houses got a labour reserve of the right size in the right place. The administration got a tidy map. Africans got twenty-one and a half million acres and the repeal of their right to buy anywhere else. The Act passed because four different interests each found something in it, not because anybody had a theory of racial separation that all four shared.

This is the machinery, and it is worth naming plainly: **an arrangement of this kind is held together not by agreement but by the fact that every faction's cheapest defence of its own position happens to be a defence of the whole.** Nobody has to intend the system. Nobody has to like the other beneficiaries. The system is what falls

out when each party does the obvious selfish thing, and it is stable in proportion to how thoroughly that is true.

The Africans who were inside

The arrangement also contained Africans, and it is important not to skip them, because a hierarchy that co-opts nobody from below is more brittle than one that co-opts a few.

Chiefs were retained, salaried and made answerable to native commissioners — men whose authority had come from an ancestor now drawing a stipend from a district office. From 1930 the Native Purchase Areas allowed Africans with means to buy freehold, and some four and a half million acres were eventually set aside; a rural African propertied class was thereby deliberately manufactured, holding title under the same law as the settler, with something concrete to lose. That provision, as the scholarship notes, was close to unique in colonial Africa, and it amounted to an admission that an African middle class was coming whether or not anyone wanted it, and had better be given somewhere to stand that was not next door to a white farm.

The co-optation worked, and the proof is on the record. In 1964, before the independence referendum, Ian Smith called an indaba of tribal leaders to demonstrate African support and obtained, by his account, universal endorsement. The British government's reply named the mechanism without embarrassment: the chiefs were in the pay of the government, and their endorsement was therefore not evidence of anything about the majority.

Both statements are true. That is what a co-opted intermediary is. And the fact that Britain could say so in public, and that Smith could hold the indaba anyway, tells you that neither side expected the point to change anything.

What happened to the man who broke ranks

The best evidence for an alignment is what it does to a defector, and Southern Rhodesia provides an unusually clean case.

Reginald Stephen Garfield Todd was a New Zealander who came out in 1934 as a missionary and ran the Dadaya mission — the school where Robert Mugabe and Ndabaningi Sithole both taught. He entered politics, and in September 1953 succeeded Huggins as Prime Minister.

His record in office was not radical by any standard outside Rhodesia. He roughly doubled the number of African children in school. He permitted multiracial trade unions. And he appointed Sir Robert Tredgold to report on the franchise, with a view to lowering the property and education qualifications. The effect would have been to add somewhere between six and ten thousand Africans to the voters' roll — raising the African share of the electorate from about two per cent to perhaps sixteen.

Not majority rule. Not a common roll on equal terms. A qualified franchise, made slightly less qualified, in a country where Africans outnumbered Europeans by more than twenty to one.

In January 1958 his entire five-member cabinet resigned en bloc. He formed another. Three months later, on 8 February 1958, the party conference removed him and elected Sir Edgar Whitehead in his place. The Federal Minister of Education, Benjamin Disraeli Goldberg, summarised the choice:

> In the final analysis, if we have to choose between Todd and a donkey, then it's the donkey!

Todd formed a splinter party. It won no seats at all in the 1958 election. Thousands of Africans wept and sang when he was thrown out, which is a fact worth recording and which changed nothing whatever, because they had no votes.

Now watch the mechanism run a second time. Whitehead had been installed precisely to stop Todd. In 1962 Whitehead's own government was defeated by the Rhodesian Front, in large part for having gone too far toward accommodation — he had repealed some discriminatory measures and campaigned for African votes. In 1964 his successor Winston Field was in turn removed by his own party for insufficient urgency about independence, and Ian Smith took over.

Four leaders in six years, each removed by the people who had installed his predecessor, each removed for being marginally more accommodating than the removers wished. Not one of them was ever removed for being too harsh.

The default, at full strength

On 5 November 1964 the electorate was asked whether it favoured independence on the basis of the 1961 constitution. Over ninety per cent said yes, on a roll of which less than fifteen per cent was African.

Consider what that means about the preceding six years. In 1958 a substantial part of the white electorate had been willing to be governed by the party of Huggins and Whitehead, the establishment party, the party of the Federation and the Salisbury banks. In 1962 that party lost by six seats — a real division, closely fought. Two years later, when the question became whether to break with Britain rather than which faction should govern, the division vanished. Over ninety per cent.

That is the default operating. The factions retained every one of their quarrels — the tobacco farmer still resented the syndicates, the artisan still distrusted the mining houses, the Salisbury professional still thought the Rhodesian Front vulgar — and when the arrangement itself was in question they voted as one body, because each of them, calculating separately, arrived at the same answer.

Reading elite coordination against the framework

Alignment is not agreement; it is the coincidence of separate self-defences. This is the module's central confirmation, and Southern Rhodesia demonstrates it about as cleanly as a case can. There was never a settler consensus in this country. There was a set of factions with genuinely conflicting interests, who fought a referendum against each other in 1922, an election against each other in 1962, and a running quarrel about labour, land and credit for seventy years. What they had in common was that every one of their positional defences required the same thing — Africans out of the skilled trades and off the watered land — and so each faction, in pursuing its own advantage, maintained the whole. The Industrial Conciliation Act is the purest specimen: a settlement between white labour and white capital, two parties in open conflict, which resolved their conflict by placing a third party outside the definition of the word at issue. Nobody had to want the system. It is what fell out.

The immune response is aimed at the defector, and it is faster and more certain than anything aimed at the ruled. Africans in this country waited decades for any response to any grievance. Garfield Todd proposed to add six thousand voters to a roll of fifty-odd thousand and his cabinet resigned within weeks, his party removed him within three months, and his new party was annihilated at the next election. The sanction for breaking ranks was applied with a speed and unanimity that the arrangement never mustered for anything else, by men who agreed on very little besides. Goldberg's remark is the alignment speaking aloud: presented with a choice between a man who might move the line and a donkey that will not, the coalition takes the donkey, and it does not even trouble to be polite about it.

And the sequence has a direction, which is the tell that the alignment is defensive rather than doctrinal. Todd 1958, Whitehead 1962, Field 1964: three leaders removed in six years, each by the previous set of removers, each for being marginally more accommodating. None removed for being too hard. That asymmetry is not a fact about Rhodesian racism; it is a structural property of any coalition held together by convergent self-interest rather than by shared doctrine. A move toward accommodation always costs some identifiable faction something immediate — the artisan his ceiling, the farmer his labour, the syndicate its acres — and so always has a constituency against it. A move toward hardening costs nobody in the room anything at all. The ratchet therefore turns one way, and it will keep turning until the whole arrangement is repriced from outside. **Where an order's coalition is held by interest rather than belief, expect it to become more rigid over time regardless of what its members privately think, and expect its leadership to be replaced in one direction only.**

Where this order coordinated badly was with the Africans it had co-opted, and it did the damage itself. The chiefs and the Native Purchase Area farmers were genuine intermediaries with genuine stakes, and they delivered — the 1964 indaba was not a fiction, and Britain's reply that the chiefs were in government pay was a description rather than a refutation. But the same state that paid the chiefs a salary had, thirteen years earlier, taken away by statute the thing that made a chief worth co-opting: the Native Land Husbandry Act removed his power to allocate land, which was the substance of his authority in the eyes of everyone below him. An order that pays its intermediaries in cash while removing the basis of their standing has converted partners into employees, and an employee delivers only what he is watched delivering. That is the one place where this hierarchy managed itself badly, and it managed itself badly because the interests being served by the 1951 Act — settler agriculture, soil administration, urban labour supply — were interests inside the room, and the chiefs' standing was not.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are two. Benjamin Disraeli Goldberg's remark about Todd and the donkey is quoted as reproduced in the secondary literature on Todd's removal; it is a reported remark, not a document, and should be treated as such. The definition of "employee" in the Southern Rhodesia Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 is given as reproduced in the legal and historical literature, with the caution already entered in Module 4 that the enrolled Act has not been consulted here.

Figures are given as the sources give them. The 1922 referendum result — 8,774 for responsible government against 5,989 for union with South Africa, fifty-nine per cent to forty-one — is consistent across the recent scholarship on the referendum and on Smuts's role, from which the

summary of the Responsible Government Association's campaign arguments is also drawn. The settler population of the early 1920s is given as fewer than thirty-five thousand against approximately eight hundred and fifty thousand Africans, following the same sources; colonial population counts of Africans in this period are estimates. The 1962 general election result of thirty-five seats to twenty-nine is as reported. Todd's franchise proposals are given as adding between six and ten thousand Africans to the roll and raising the African share of the electorate from about two to about sixteen per cent; different accounts give the figures slightly differently and both should be read as the orders of magnitude that were being argued about rather than as a settled arithmetic. The 1964 referendum result is given as over ninety per cent in favour on a roll less than fifteen per cent African. The acreage set aside as Native Purchase Areas is given at about four and a half million acres under the 1930 schedule, with the caution from Module 2 that figures up to seven and a half million appear in the literature reflecting later additions and the Commission's original recommendation.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: the recent work on African perspectives of the 1922 referendum and on Smuts and the price of union, from which the referendum material comes; the biographical literature on Garfield Todd, including Michael Auret's and Susan Woodhouse's accounts of his removal; Colin Leys's *European Politics in Southern Rhodesia* (1959), which remains the standing analysis of settler factionalism and stands behind the account of the interest groups; and the recent work on property rights and Native Purchase Area farmers, from which the observation about the near-uniqueness of that provision in colonial Africa is taken.

Two cautions. First, this module deliberately reads a set of separate episodes as instances of a single mechanism, and that is an interpretation rather than a finding. The men who resigned from Todd's cabinet in January 1958 gave reasons of their own, including a dispute about funding for teachers, and it is possible to tell the story of each episode without reference to any general alignment. What the module claims is that the pattern across the episodes — the direction of every leadership change between 1958 and 1964, and the convergence of the 1964 vote after the division of 1962 — is not well explained episode by episode. Second, the African side of the arrangement is under-documented here relative to the settler side, for the reason given throughout this study: the chiefs' correspondence with native commissioners survives because commissioners filed it, and what a chief thought about his own position survives mainly where somebody asked him later.

THE PROVISIONS OF ANY EXISTING LAW

Plurality or foreclosure — a colony with genuine liberty inside it, the clause that hollowed out a bill of rights before it was signed, and what happened to the settlers' own freedoms once they stopped quarrelling

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What the settler actually had

It would be convenient to record that Rhodesian liberty was a fraud. It was not, and the study is worth nothing if it pretends otherwise.

From 1923 the colony had responsible government: an elected Legislative Assembly, a cabinet answerable to it, and a Prime Minister who could be and repeatedly was removed. Elections were real and were lost — the establishment party was thrown out in 1962 by a party of small farmers and artisans, and before that a sitting Prime Minister was ejected by his own party conference. Referendums were held on questions that mattered and on questions that did not: the constitutional future in 1922, the legalisation of sweepstakes in 1934, the constitution again in 1961, independence in 1964. Twenty thousand ballot papers were returned on the sweepstakes question.

There was an independent judiciary staffed by men trained in the English tradition, and it was independent enough that the Chief Justice of the Federation resigned in public rather than administer a statute he thought outrageous. There was a genuinely free press, privately owned through the Argus group in South Africa, which opposed the government's central policy so persistently that the government eventually censored it. There were trade unions with real bargaining power, and they used it — the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934 exists because white building workers struck and won. There were farmers' unions, chambers of mines, chambers of commerce, professional bodies, churches with independent voices, and a body of contract and property law that a man could rely on against his neighbour and against the state.

For about a quarter of a million people, this was among the freer places on earth. The comparison the settlers themselves would have reached for is the right one: Virginia in 1770. Washington, Jefferson and Mason enjoyed liberties as substantial as any in the world, exercised them vigorously, and complained bitterly and sincerely when the metropole encroached on them, in a colony where two in five people were owned.

And it was real because they fought each other

The liberty was not imported as a principle. It was deposited as a residue.

Look at what each of the colony's freedoms is made of. Responsible government exists because settlers spent fifteen years fighting the Chartered Company for control of the revenue, and won in 1923; it is a victory in a quarrel about money. The industrial-relations machinery exists because white labour fought white capital to a standstill in the early 1930s; the statute is the peace treaty. The independence of the judiciary was worth having because there were parties who might need it against each other. The press was free because it was owned outside the country by people whose interest was circulation rather than office, and because the settler market was large enough and literate enough to sustain a paper that annoyed the government.

Every one of these is a protection somebody obtained against somebody else with power. Nobody had to believe in liberty for any of it to exist. The Company wanted a docile administration and got a parliament; the mining houses wanted cheap labour and got an industrial council; the artisan wanted a ceiling and got a bargaining system; and what accumulated from all of it, over decades, was procedure — notice, hearing, appeal, publication, a vote — which is what rights are made of before anyone gets around to calling them rights.

That is the whole mechanism, and it explains the module's central puzzle, which is why the identical formal instruments produced nothing whatever for Africans.

What the African had, in form

Take the formal position at face value for a moment, because the defenders of the arrangement did, and their statement of it was accurate.

The franchise had been open to all races on identical terms since 1898. There was no racial bar in the electoral law at any point. The courts were open to Africans and heard African cases. From 1961 there was a Declaration of Rights modelled on the United Nations instruments, drafted along the same lines as those given to Sierra Leone and to

the sovereign members of the Commonwealth, and providing that any person alleging a contravention might apply to the Appellate Division of the High Court for redress.

Now the arithmetic. At the general election of 1965, the A roll — the original common roll, renamed — contained 95,208 whites and 2,256 Africans. The B roll, created in 1961 with lower qualifications expressly to bring Africans in, produced a turnout in that election of 720 votes across the fifty constituency seats and 1,443 across the fifteen district seats.

There was no bar. There was a price, and the price had been set by the same legislature that set the wage, allocated the land, defined an African out of the meaning of "employee," and confined African maize to the export pool. The formal openness of the franchise was not a lie and it was not a loophole. It was the design.

Clause 14

Which brings the module to the single most instructive document in this study.

In 1961 a constitutional conference produced a new settlement. Southern Rhodesia would receive a Declaration of Rights and a Constitutional Council to scrutinise legislation, and the franchise would be widened by the creation of the B roll. In exchange, Britain would relinquish virtually all its remaining reserved powers — including the power, exercised in Module 4 by refusal, to disallow legislation imposing on natives disabilities not imposed on Europeans.

The Declaration of Rights ran to twelve clauses of liberties. Then came the fourteenth. On 22 June 1961, in the Commons, a member laid it before the House:

> Yet Clause 14 of the Declaration itself, which is to be found on pages 41 to 42, says that nothing, in the admirable Declaration of Liberties in the first twelve Clauses, shall be held to be in contravention of any of the provisions of any existing law. This means that the Law and Order Maintenance Act, the outrageous provisions which caused the resignation of the Chief Justice of Southern Rhodesia, will still...

And then he put the two questions that measure the clause:

> Could it mean, if the prohibition of trade union action by Africans were introduced by Law and passed, that it would be found under the clause not to be contrary to the Declaration of Rights? Could it mean, if forced labour were imposed by the Legislature in Southern Rhodesia, that it could be found by the court not to be contrary to the Declaration of Rights? I would

> prefer to keep the power, to disallow such a law, in our own hands rather than to leave it to a protecting clause of that description.

Read what is being described. A bill of rights, modelled on the United Nations Charter, drafted by lawyers, printed on pages forty-one and forty-two of a White Paper — with a clause providing that it does not apply to any law already on the statute book. And the statute book at that moment contained the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act, the Emergency Powers Act, the Land Apportionment Act, the Industrial Conciliation Act, the Native Land Husbandry Act, the Natives Registration Act and the whole accumulated machinery of seventy years.

The rights were prospective. The repression was existing.

And the Constitutional Council, which was to scrutinise new discriminatory legislation, could issue opinions that the legislature was free to disregard; fifteen seats were anchored to the B roll, and a two-thirds majority was available without them.

Britain took the deal. The power of disallowance — the instrument that had been invoked in 1935 and declined, and invoked in 1945 and found not to reach the case — was surrendered in exchange for a Declaration of Rights with the existing law carved out of it.

What was predicted, and what happened

The prediction made for the new constitution is on the record, and it should be set beside the outcome without commentary.

In the Lords on 16 November 1961:

> Now, Africans should, at the first General Election under the new Constitution, win all fifteen "B" roll seats and, perhaps, one or two "A" roll seats; and, if they seize the opportunities which this Constitution offers they will be able to exercise an influence on the other "A" roll seats which no candidate of any Party will be able to afford to ignore. No one doubts that, under this Constitution and by virtue of their greater numbers, the predominance in the political direction of Southern Rhodesia will pass progressively...

The nationalist movements rejected the constitution and boycotted the rolls, reasoning that participation would legitimate a settlement that gave a fifth of the seats to four-fifths of the people. That was their decision and it had costs, and it is not for this study

to say whether it was right. What it produced, together with the qualification bar, was the figure already given: 720 B-roll votes cast across fifty constituencies in 1965.

At that election the Rhodesian Front took fifty of the sixty-five seats. Six months later the country left the Empire.

Foreclosure, with dates

Meanwhile the other route was closed, and the closing can be dated to the month.

The Southern Rhodesia African National Congress was banned at the beginning of 1959 and most of its members arrested. Its successor, the National Democratic Party, founded in January 1960 by the mission-educated stratum described in Module 4 — Chitepo the advocate, Mugabe and Sithole the graduate teachers — was banned in December 1961. Its successor, the Zimbabwe African People's Union, was banned in September 1962. Both ZANU and ZAPU were banned in August 1964 and their leaders detained; several of them stayed in detention for the next ten years.

Five and a half years, four organisations, four bans. No African political body in Southern Rhodesia was permitted to exist for longer than about two years. Every one of them was constituted lawfully, operated openly, and was dissolved by executive order under statutes which the Declaration of Rights of 1961 did not touch, because they were existing law.

Set that beside what a settler could do in the same years: form a party, contest an election, lose it, form another party, publish a newspaper attacking the government, sue a minister, and go on living in his house.

Both populations had the same rights. One of them had liberty.

And then the settlers lost theirs

The last section is the one that makes this module worth writing, because it tests the mechanism rather than merely describing it.

If settler liberty was a residue of settler conflict rather than a possession or a principle, then it should not survive the end of the conflict. The prediction is testable and Southern Rhodesia tests it inside a decade.

In 1962 the settler electorate was genuinely divided: thirty-five seats to twenty-nine, two parties with real support, an establishment and an insurgency. By November 1964 the

same electorate voted over ninety per cent for independence. By May 1965 the Rhodesian Front held fifty of sixty-five seats and was unopposed in twenty-two constituencies. And within a year of that:

The press that had opposed UDI was submitting proofs to a censor and printing white columns where the material had been. It became an offence to publish matter likely to cause alarm, fear or despondency. An Official Secrets Act criminalised the publication of classified material. The broadcaster was taken over. The Joint Operations Command acquired a power of media blackout that survived until the election of 1980. The courts, having no bill of rights that reached the existing statutes, were left with the position their Chief Justice had already demonstrated in 1960: resignation was available; invalidation was not.

The settlers had built, over seventy years of quarrelling, one of the more elaborate structures of representative liberty in Africa. They dismantled the load-bearing parts of it themselves, in about eighteen months, and the instrument they used was a parliament they had elected.

Reading plurality against the framework

Liberty in this colony was real, and it was a by-product. Nothing in the Rhodesian record supports the idea that the settlers' freedoms descended from a principle they carried out from England, though they believed that and said it constantly. Every one of those freedoms is traceable to a specific quarrel between parties who each held a share of something and wanted protection from the others: settlers against the Company, labour against capital, small farmer against syndicate, newspaper against minister, and all of them against a metropole that might interfere. The procedure that accumulated out of those quarrels — the vote, the hearing, the appeal, the published account — is what the participants later called their rights. This is the model confirmed, and confirmed in a case where the beneficiaries would have indignantly denied it.

The line between inside and outside is not a line of rights. It is a line of shares. Africans in Southern Rhodesia held, on paper, nearly everything the settlers held: the same franchise law from 1898, the same courts, and from 1961 a Declaration of Rights drawn on the same models as Sierra Leone's. They held no share in the force, the revenue or the law-making, and therefore no faction inside the arrangement had any interest in protecting them from any other faction. That is the whole of the difference. **A right is what somebody with power will fight for on your behalf because your protection happens to be his protection too. Where nobody's protection depends**

on yours, what you have is not a right but a permission, and it will be withdrawn at the moment it becomes inconvenient — which is precisely what happened to four African political parties between 1959 and 1964.

The diagnostic instrument is the savings clause. This is the module's practical contribution. An order that wants the appearance of constitutional liberty without the substance does not need to omit the bill of rights; omission is conspicuous and expensive. It writes the bill of rights in full, on the best available model, and adds a clause exempting existing law. Clause 14 of the 1961 Declaration is that device in its purest form, and its effect was total: every instrument of the seventy-year machinery was untouched, and only future legislation was constrained, in a legislature that already had everything it needed. **When examining a constitutional settlement, read the savings and transitional provisions first and the schedule of liberties second.** The liberties are aspirational; the savings clause is operative. And note what it was traded for: Britain surrendered the one power that could actually have invalidated a Rhodesian statute in exchange for a document that could not.

And plurality is a condition, not a property. It can collapse, and when it does the liberty goes with it. This is the finding I would carry furthest, because it generalises past the colonial case. The settlers' liberty was a residue of settler conflict; the moment the conflict ended, the residue evaporated. Between 1962 and 1966 the same population that had run a genuinely contested two-party system censored its own newspapers, took over its own broadcaster, criminalised despondency, and left its judges nothing to do but resign. Nobody conquered them. No external power imposed it. Their factions simply stopped fighting each other, because an external threat had made every faction's interest identical, and the machinery of mutual protection had nothing left to protect anyone from.

An order whose freedoms exist because its powerful are divided should be understood as holding those freedoms on a contingency, and the contingency is the division. Unify the elite — by war, by siege, by a threat that reprices everybody's interest the same way — and the freedoms will be surrendered by the people who own them, voluntarily, and fast.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are from Hansard and are given as printed. The passage on Clause 14 of the Declaration of Rights, including the two questions about African trade union action and about forced labour, is from HC Deb 22 June 1961; the sentence describing the effect of the clause is truncated in the source consulted and is given here to the point at which the reproduction ends. The

prediction about the first general election under the new constitution is from HL Deb 16 November 1961 and is likewise given to the point at which the reproduction ends. The description of the amendment procedure and the basic clauses, and of the Constitutional Council as an opinion-forming body whose opinions could be disregarded, is from HC Deb 8 November 1961. Readers should note that all three are quoted from the online parliamentary archive rather than from the bound volumes, and that the White Paper referred to — Cmnd. 1400, with the Declaration at pages 41–42 — has not been consulted directly here; before Clause 14 is quoted as a legal text rather than as a parliamentary description of one, it should be read in the White Paper.

Figures are as the sources give them. The composition of the A roll at the 1965 general election — 95,208 whites and 2,256 Africans — and the B-roll turnout of 720 constituency votes and 1,443 district votes are from the published election returns. The 1961 constitutional referendum result of 42,004 for and 21,846 against on a register of 83,486 is as reported; the referendum was held in 1961, and readers will find it dated to 1962 in some settler sources, apparently by confusion with the constitution's entry into force. The 1922 and 1934 referendum figures are as given in Modules 8 and elsewhere. The 1964 independence referendum figure of over ninety per cent on a roll less than fifteen per cent African is as reported. The banning sequence — the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress in early 1959, the National Democratic Party in December 1961, ZAPU in September 1962, and ZANU and ZAPU in August 1964 with detentions following — is consistent across the chronologies, though individual sources differ on exact months.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: Colin Leys on settler politics; the biographical and political literature on the nationalist parties and their proscription; and the constitutional literature on the 1961 settlement and its savings provisions. The characterisation of the nationalist boycott of the B roll as a deliberate strategic decision follows the standard accounts; the internal debates within the NDP and ZAPU about participation were real and are not reconstructed here.

Two cautions. First, this module makes a comparative claim — that settler Rhodesia was among the freer places on earth for the people inside it — which is stated as the settlers experienced it and is not offered as an index. Second, and more importantly, the closing argument that settler liberty collapsed because settler plurality collapsed is an interpretation of a correlation across four years, and other readings are available: that the liberties were surrendered under the pressure of sanctions and war rather than through the loss of internal division, or that the Rhodesian Front's programme had always included them. The three explanations are not exclusive and the sources do not decide between them. What can be said flatly is the sequence: a closely divided electorate in December 1962, over ninety per cent agreement in November 1964, fifty seats of sixty-five in May 1965, and censors reading proofs in October 1965.

EVERY ESCAPE ROUTE

Change and collapse — who actually ended the settler order, why it was not the man paying the hut tax, and what a coup by junior officers in Lisbon did to a country two thousand kilometres away

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

The claim to be tested

There is a version of this story in which the people of Zimbabwe rose against their oppressors and won their freedom. There is another in which a small white population was strangled by sanctions and abandoned by its friends. Both are told with conviction, both contain true statements, and neither survives contact with the sequence of events.

The claim this module tests is narrower and harder. It is that in an arrangement of this kind the man at the bottom does not end it — not because he is passive, not because he is content, and not because he lacks courage, but because he holds no position from which an ending can be initiated. Arrangements are ended by people inside them. What the man at the bottom can do is make the arrangement expensive; what he cannot do is decide that it is over. That decision is taken by people with something to trade, and it is taken among themselves.

The test case for this is not Rhodesia. It is Virginia. The men who broke Britain's hold on North America in 1776 were not the tenant farmer, the indentured servant or the slave. They were the colonial elite — men holding land, militia commissions, assembly seats and, in several cases, several hundred human beings. They broke away in the aftermath of a war that had left the metropole heavily in debt, over a territory that was worth considerably less to London than the sugar islands, and they succeeded because a rival great power came in on their side. The slave and the tenant supplied the weight. They did not supply the decision, and they got nothing.

Rhodesia runs the same sequence with different names, and the sequence is the module.

Seventy years in which nothing from below moved anything

Begin with the negative evidence, because it is substantial.

The risings of 1896–97 were the largest and most costly challenge the order ever faced from the ruled, and they were crushed inside eighteen months by imperial troops, at a cost in African lives of somewhere between five and ten thousand. After that, as one summary of the period puts it flatly, from the end of the risings until the modern nationalist movement of the 1970s the country's white administration experienced no significant violent resistance from the African majority.

That is seventy years. Across them, the hut tax was paid, the passes were carried, sixteen thousand convictions a year were recorded for paper offences, the cattle were culled, the maize was sold at the depot price, and nothing moved. There were strikes — the railway strike of 1945, the general strike of 1948 — and they were contained. There was organisation, and it was banned: the African National Congress in 1959, the National Democratic Party in 1961, ZAPU in 1962, ZANU and ZAPU together in 1964 with the leadership detained for the following decade.

None of this is a criticism of the people involved. It is a measurement of the floor. While London and Salisbury were cooperating and the machinery was functioning, the arrangement was not beatable from below, and the people at the bottom were, on the whole, correct in acting as though it were not.

What changed the position was a series of decisions taken by other people.

The metropole reprices

Britain emerged from the Second World War having won it and having spent everything. What followed across the next twenty years was not a moral awakening but an accounting exercise conducted under pressure: India in 1947, the Gold Coast in 1957, and then, between 1960 and 1964, the greater part of British Africa.

In February 1960 Harold Macmillan told the South African parliament in Cape Town that a wind of change was blowing through the continent and that the growth of national consciousness was a political fact whether anyone liked it or not. That speech is remembered as a prophecy. It was a notification. The metropole was telling its settler populations that the account had been re-run and the answer had come out differently.

The concrete consequence for Southern Rhodesia arrived in 1963, when the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was dissolved. Northern Rhodesia became Zambia and

Nyasaland became Malawi, both under African majority governments, within a year. Southern Rhodesia — the senior partner, the oldest settlement, the one with the parliament and the industry — was left holding a constitution that gave four-fifths of the population a fifth of the seats, watching Britain hand its two neighbours over inside twelve months.

This is the repricing, and it is worth being exact about what it was and was not. It was not a decision that African rule was right. It was a decision that holding central Africa against the current had become more expensive than it was worth to a country with a balance-of-payments problem and a Cold War to fund. The Rhodesian settler read it correctly, and his reading is what produced the next event.

The settler elite fractures

On 11 November 1965 the government of Rhodesia, elected in May of that year with fifty of sixty-five seats on a roll containing 95,208 whites and 2,256 Africans, declared the country independent of the Crown.

Consider carefully who did this. Not the reserves. Not the compounds. Not the townships. It was done by a government of farmers, servicemen and businessmen, holding title deeds, commissions in the security forces, seats in a parliament and shares in the country's banks and tobacco floors — an elite inside the imperial arrangement, breaking from the elite above it over the question of who should decide. They did it in a document that borrows the cadence of the American Declaration of Independence and ends by asking God to save the Queen: loyal to the Crown, in rebellion against its government, exactly as Virginia had been in 1775.

This is the point at which the seed for this study concluded that the collection's model of colonial collapse breaks. It does not break. It was being read through the wrong end. The model of collapse in these papers is a model of elite fracture — the apex splitting and one faction arming the population against the other — and the American Revolution is already the standing example of it. What the colonial studies had been doing, without noticing, was treating the metropole as the only elite in the picture and the colony as an undifferentiated below. In a settler colony that is simply false. The settler is an elite. He has land, arms, a vote and a parliament. When he breaks from London, that is not a peasant revolt failing to happen; it is the fracture happening, in the place where the fracture in such an order actually occurs.

And the African population's role in November 1965 is precisely the role of the Virginia slave in July 1776: present, indispensable to the economy under dispute, and not consulted.

The counter-argument, at full strength

Now the objection, which is serious and must not be handled gently.

Between December 1972 and December 1979 a war was fought in this country which the Rhodesian government's own statistics put at 20,350 dead: 1,361 members of the security forces, some 10,450 classified as insurgents, 7,790 black civilians and 468 white civilians. Other estimates run to thirty thousand and beyond, and the government's category of insurgent dead is not a category any careful reader should accept at face value. Between 1972 and 1980 there were 2,504 vehicle detonations of landmines, killing 632 people and injuring 4,410; the rate more than doubled between 1978 and 1979.

The war reached into every white household. National service, four and a half months in 1955, went to nine months in 1966 and to a year in 1973, and then the territorial reserves were called up again and again; men well into middle age were serving, and white males over seventeen were forbidden to leave the country. Emigration, which had run both ways through the sixties, turned sharply: in 1976 there was a net loss of 7,072 whites, with more than a thousand leaving every month, from a population of somewhere between two hundred and two hundred and fifty thousand. By 1979 the security forces could field about 52,800 men of all categories against something in the order of 45,500 guerrillas.

An order losing a thousand of its people a month, conscripting men in their forties, and facing an insurgent force approaching the size of its own is not an order that is being politely repriced by diplomats. It is being destroyed. Any account of this collapse that does not put the war at the centre of it is dishonest.

So the module has to answer two questions rather than one. Who fought that war, and what made it winnable?

Who fought it

The armies in the field were not the peasantry in arms. They were organised forces — ZANLA and ZIPRA — with ranks, training camps, external bases, and foreign supply: Soviet anti-tank mines, Chinese and Soviet instruction, and the logistics that only states

provide. Their recruits came overwhelmingly from the rural African population, and the war was fought across that population, on it and through it, at a cost the casualty figures above only begin to record.

But look at the leadership, and then look back at Module 4.

Robert Mugabe: Kutama mission, Jesuits and Marist Brothers, teacher's diploma, then Fort Hare on a scholarship because there was no university in his own country. Joshua Nkomo: a carpentry course at Tjolotjo — Keigwin's own industrial school — then Adams College and the Jan Hofmeyr School in Johannesburg, because there was no secondary provision at home worth the name. Herbert Chitepo: St Augustine's Penhalonga, Adams, Fort Hare, then London for the bar, returning as the first African advocate in the country and eventually chairman of ZANU. Ndabaningi Sithole: American Board mission schools, then theology.

Not one of them was a peasant. Every one of them was a product of the mission schools that the state had left to do the work it declined to do, and of the South African colleges to which they had to travel because Rhodesia would not build the ladder at home. The order that decided in 1920 that raising the mass ever so little was preferable to advancing the few did not thereby prevent the few from existing. It exported their formation to a place it could not supervise, and got them back credentialled, connected to every other liberation movement in southern Africa, and with no chair to sit in.

That is a counter-elite, manufactured by the arrangement's own refusal to manufacture an administrative one. It is the same stratum that had founded the African National Congress in 1957 and the NDP in 1960 and had been banned four times in five years. When they went to war, they did so as a displaced elite with a grievance about position, at the head of a rural population with a grievance about land — and Module 5 has already dated the moment that grievance became mobilisable, which was 1951, and named the man who said so.

What made it winnable

And now the decisive fact, which is the one this module exists to establish.

Through the 1960s the war was containable. The incursions of 1966 and after were small and were destroyed; the security forces were competent and the country's borders were held by friendly or neutral powers on every side — South Africa to the south, Portuguese Mozambique to the east, Portuguese-influenced territory beyond. There was no sanctuary and no supply line worth the name.

On 25 April 1974 a group of junior officers in Lisbon overthrew the government of Marcello Caetano and ended the Estado Novo. The Carnation Revolution was made by Portuguese captains, for Portuguese reasons, about Portuguese wars in three colonies, and nobody in it was thinking about Rhodesia. Its consequences for Rhodesia were total. Mozambique became independent on 25 June 1975 under a FRELIMO government that had fought its own war against Lisbon; it closed the Rhodesian border in March 1976; and it opened to ZANLA a sanctuary and supply route along more than a thousand kilometres of Rhodesia's eastern frontier.

The British Foreign Office's own retrospective account of the settlement states the effect without ornament: the granting of independence to Mozambique, the closure of the border and the support given by the FRELIMO government to Mugabe's forces operating from its territory *transformed the time-scale for Rhodesia's prospects of survival*.

Hold that in view. The single change that made the Rhodesian position unholdable was produced by an elite fracture inside a different metropole, two thousand kilometres away, by men who had never heard of the Land Apportionment Act.

And how it was ended

The war supplied the pressure. It did not supply the decision, and the record of the decision is unusually complete because the men who took it wrote it down.

From late 1974 the South African Prime Minister, B. J. Vorster, backed by Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, began pressing for a Rhodesian settlement. The reasoning is set out in the same Foreign Office account: Pretoria, conscious of the danger of being drawn into increasingly direct support for a regime with no long-term prospects of survival, and irritated by Smith's attempts to appeal over its head to South African opinion, began at last actively seeking a political settlement and showed that it was prepared to put pressure on Smith.

This is the patron elite withdrawing. Rhodesia's oil, its rail routes to the sea, its arms and its financial lifeline all ran through South Africa. Pretoria did not have to fight Smith. It had to decide that he was no longer worth the premium.

Then the machinery. Henry Kissinger flew to Africa in April 1976 and declared American support for majority rule in a speech at Lusaka; he met Vorster twice, in Germany and in Switzerland, and over dinner on 23 June a dozen white men spent two hours on the future of a subcontinent of black people. A strategy was agreed between

them: Vorster would deliver Smith, Kissinger would deliver the Zambians and Tanzanians. On 19 September 1976 they met Smith in Pretoria, where he happened to be for a rugby match, and put the terms to him. Kissinger's own account of the moment is the most candid sentence in the whole affair:

> it had been my diplomacy which had closed off Smith's every escape route

On 24 September 1976 Ian Smith broadcast to the nation that his government had accepted majority rule within two years.

Four days in a Pretoria hotel, arranged by an American Secretary of State, executed through a South African Prime Minister, addressed to a Rhodesian one — and the thing that seventy years of taxation, dispossession and imprisonment had not shifted was conceded in principle.

It took another three years to execute, through the failed Geneva conference, the Anglo-American proposals of 1977, and the internal settlement of 1979 that produced Bishop Muzorewa's government and was recognised by nobody. The end came at Lancaster House in London in December 1979, negotiated between the Thatcher government, Lord Carrington, Muzorewa, and the Patriotic Front of Mugabe and Nkomo — the two men who had been detained for a decade under statutes the 1961 Declaration of Rights had not touched. Sanctions were lifted; the country reverted briefly to British rule; elections were held under British and Commonwealth supervision in March 1980; ZANU-PF took about sixty-three per cent of the vote; and on 18 April 1980 Robert Mugabe became Prime Minister of Zimbabwe.

At that election, for the first time, the man who had paid the hut tax voted. It was the last step in the sequence, not the first.

Reading collapse against the framework

The model does not break here. It was being applied with the wrong census of elites. The seed for this study recorded that Rhodesia complicates or refutes the collection's account of colonial collapse, because the settler order was not ended by a rising of the ruled and was not simply abandoned by an exhausted metropole. Both observations are correct and neither is a refutation. The collection's model of how an order ends is a model of fracture at the top, with the American Revolution as its standing case, and Rhodesia is that case reproduced. What had gone wrong was a habit, carried over from the studies of non-settler colonies, of treating the metropole as the

only elite in the frame. In a settler colony there are at least two, and the junior one has land, arms, votes and a parliament. UDI is the fracture. It is not a missing peasant revolt.

The sequence, stated for reuse. Metropole reprices under fiscal and geopolitical pressure (1945–63). Junior elite refuses the new price and fractures (1965). A fracture in a *third* order transforms the strategic geography (Lisbon, 1974). A counter-elite, formed by the order's own withheld formation and credentialled abroad, supplies leadership to a population whose grievance was made mobilisable by a specific earlier policy error (1951). The war raises the price to a level at which the patron elite's calculation flips (1974–76). The patron withdraws and imposes terms (Pretoria, September 1976). A settlement is negotiated among elites (Lancaster House, 1979). The ruled vote last (1980).

The man at the bottom appears in that sequence three times: as recruit, as casualty, and as voter at the very end. He is never the author. This is not a judgement about his worth or his courage — the casualty column says everything about the courage — but about position, and it is the same position the Virginia slave occupied in 1776 with the same result, which is that the arrangement changed hands above his head and the land question was left for later.

The new finding is that the decisive fracture need not be in your own order. This collection has treated elite fracture as an internal event: the apex of *this* hierarchy splitting. Rhodesia will not fit that. The event that made the settler position unholdable was a coup in Lisbon made by Portuguese captains about Portuguese wars, and its effect ran through an independent Mozambique to a border, a sanctuary and a supply line. Where orders are linked in a region — by shared frontiers, shared enemies, shared patrons and shared fear — a fracture anywhere in the chain reprices everyone in it, and the order that falls need not be the one that broke. **When assessing the stability of such an order, count not only its own elite coalition but the coalitions of every order whose survival it depends on.** Rhodesia's actuarial position in 1973 was a function of the political stability of a dictatorship in Portugal, and nobody in Salisbury had that on the balance sheet.

And the war has to be given its correct weight, which is large and is not the weight of authorship. Without ZANLA and ZIPRA in the field there is no reason for Vorster to press Smith and no reason for Kissinger to fly. The rural population made the arrangement expensive enough that the elites who could end it found it worth ending — which is exactly the function the framework assigns to pressure from below, and it is not a small function. It is the difference between an order that persists and one that gets repriced. But pressure and decision are different operations performed by different

people, and conflating them produces the two false histories this module opened with. The guerrilla armies could raise the cost. They could not, and did not, take Salisbury. What took Salisbury was a hotel room in Pretoria and a conference room in London.

A final note on the pattern, since it is the point of running these cases side by side. Britain in 1763 had beaten France, doubled its territory in North America, and acquired a debt it could not carry; it tried to make the colonies contribute, the colonial elite refused, France came in, and Britain let go of a possession that had always been worth less than the sugar islands. Britain in 1945 had beaten Germany and acquired a debt it could not carry; it repriced Africa, the Rhodesian settler elite refused, other powers came in on the other side, and Britain let go of a possession that had never paid a dividend during the whole period it governed it. In both cases the metropolitan account was re-run first, the junior elite fractured second, an external power decided the outcome third, and the people at the bottom were counted last and paid throughout.

That is not a law. It is a shape that recurs, and the reason it recurs is that arrangements are ended by the people who hold positions in them, and the people who hold positions are never the people who carry the cost.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are few and are flagged individually. The Foreign Office's assessment — that Mozambican independence, the border closure and FRELIMO's support for ZANLA transformed the time-scale for Rhodesia's prospects of survival, and that the South African government, conscious of the dangers of being drawn in and of Smith's attempts to appeal over its head, began at last actively seeking a settlement and showed willingness to pressure him — is quoted and paraphrased from the FCO historians' published documentary volume on the Rhodesia settlement. Henry Kissinger's remark that his diplomacy had closed off Smith's every escape route is quoted, in a single short phrase, from his memoirs as reproduced in the scholarly literature on his southern African shuttle; the surrounding material is paraphrased. Harold Macmillan's Cape Town speech of 3 February 1960 is paraphrased rather than quoted, since the text has not been checked in this study.

Figures are given as ranges wherever the sources disagree, and here they disagree badly. The casualty total of 20,350 for December 1972 to December 1979 — 1,361 security forces, about 10,450 insurgents, 7,790 black civilians, 468 white civilians — is the Rhodesian government's own count and is reproduced here as such; readers should treat the insurgent figure with particular caution, since the category was elastic, the incentives ran one way, and cross-border raids such as the Nyadzonya action of August 1976 killed people whose classification is disputed to this day. Higher totals of thirty thousand and above appear in the literature, and one compilation gives thirty-four thousand across sixteen years. The landmine figures of 2,504 detonations, 632 killed and 4,410 injured between 1972 and 1980 are as published. Force strengths for 1979 — about 52,800 across all Rhodesian security categories against something in the region of 45,500 guerrillas — are as given in the reference literature and are estimates. Net white emigration of 7,072 in 1976, and outflows exceeding a

thousand a month, are as reported, against a white population variously given at two hundred to two hundred and fifty thousand at the period's start; the net immigration recorded for 1974–75 reflects some twenty thousand Portuguese refugees from Angola and Mozambique and should not be read as confidence in the country. National service durations — four and a half months from 1955, nine months from 1966, a year from 1973, with reserve call-ups thereafter and conscription eventually extended to older men and, from 1978–79, to black conscripts — are as given, and the upper age limits reported in different sources vary. The 1980 election figure of about sixty-three per cent for ZANU-PF is as reported.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited: the recent work on Kissinger's southern African diplomacy, including the account of the meetings with Vorster in Germany and Switzerland and the Pretoria meeting of 19 September 1976; the FCO historians' documentary collection on the settlement; and the standard accounts of the détente period, the Geneva conference, the internal settlement and Lancaster House. The biographical material on Mugabe, Nkomo, Chitepo and Sithole is as sourced in Module 4.

Three cautions. First, this module makes a causal claim about the Portuguese coup that is widely held but is a judgement: it is possible to argue that the guerrilla campaign would have escalated regardless and that Mozambique merely accelerated it. What is not disputable is the Foreign Office's contemporaneous assessment, quoted above, and the observable change in the war's scale from 1976. Second, the reading of the African population's role as fuel rather than author is a structural claim and will be read by some as diminishing. It is not intended so and the casualty column is the answer to it; what is claimed is that decisions were taken elsewhere, which the record shows, not that the people who died were incidental, which it does not. Third, this module deliberately does not adjudicate the Zimbabwean historiographical dispute about whether the peasantry directed the guerrillas or the guerrillas directed the peasantry — the Ranger and Kriger positions — because that dispute concerns the internal conduct of the war rather than the question of who ended the order, and taking a side in it is not necessary to the argument made here.

THE LAND DID NOT GROW

The grim accounting — a conquest that inherited no metabolic debt, manufactured one over sixty years by fixing a boundary, and then cited the result as proof that Africans could not farm

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What was and was not inherited

The usual grim accounting of a conquest has two columns. The first is the sword: the people killed in the fighting and in the pacification that follows. The second is slower and generally larger. A settled civilisation that has raised its population above the land's unassisted carrying capacity — by irrigation, by terracing, by granaries, by a state that moves grain from surplus districts to deficit ones — is carrying a debt against its own coordination. Break the coordination and the note falls due, and the die-off that follows is usually a multiple of the battle dead.

Southern Rhodesia does not have that second column, and it is worth being precise about why, because the reason is the whole of this module.

The orders the Company found on the plateau in 1890 were not carrying a metabolic debt. The Shona chieftaincies practised extensive cultivation — shifting fields, long fallows, stumps left in the ground, mixed cropping — on a large territory at low population density. Their staples included the small grains, sorghum, millet and rapoko, which are drought-tolerant where maize is not, and which store. Their principal wealth was cattle, which is a food reserve that walks. Their insurance against a bad season was fourfold: grain in pits, beasts to trade, kin in other districts with a claim on them, and unoccupied land to move onto. The Ndebele state added tribute flows across districts, which is a coordination mechanism, but it was two generations old and it did not sustain a population above what the ground would carry.

Nothing in that arrangement was fragile in the way an irrigation civilisation is fragile. There was no hydraulic system to break, no granary bureaucracy to disperse, no dense settlement dependent on a distribution network. The conquest could and did destroy

the political order without producing a famine, because the political order was not what was feeding people.

So the module's first finding is a negative one and it confirms the expectation: **there was no inherited metabolic note to call in.** The colonial order did not collapse a system that was holding a population up.

What it did instead was build one, from nothing, over sixty years, and hand the bill to the same people.

How you manufacture a metabolic debt

The mechanism is a single sentence and the rest is arithmetic. **An extensive agricultural system's entire safety margin is space. Fix the boundary and you convert a resilient low-density system into a fragile high-density one without anybody changing a single farming practice.**

Here is the arithmetic. The Native Reserves comprised an estimated 21,127,040 acres in 1930. In 1952 they comprised 20,859,350 acres — slightly less, after two decades of adjustments, additions and excisions. Over the same span, the African population of Southern Rhodesia rose from about 937,000 in 1931 to about 1,970,000 in 1951.

The population more than doubled. The land did not grow.

And the reserves absorbed, on top of natural increase, everybody removed from elsewhere: the people evicted from alienated farms under the Land Apportionment Act, the labour tenants pushed off European land as farmers were urged to stop renting to squatters, the Rhodesdale evictees resettled a hundred kilometres away in Sanyati. The native commissioner at Shurugwi had seen it coming in 1930, writing that with the passage of the Land Apportionment Act there would ensue an exodus into the reserve from the alienated farms and Crown lands, and that this would make an already overcrowded reserve uninhabitable.

Then remove the buffers, one at a time, each for a separate administrative reason.

The cattle went first: half of Matabeleland's herds confiscated as loot in 1894, and the rest killed by rinderpest in 1896, which took eighty to ninety per cent of what remained. They recovered over the following decades, and were then reduced again by compulsory destocking from 1945, imposed to bring numbers down to an official assessment of what the reserve could carry — an assessment made necessary by the reserve's size, which the state had set.

Mobility went next. A population whose drought strategy had been to walk to relatives in a better-watered district found the boundary fixed, land outside the reserve closed to purchase after 1930, and movement itself a criminal offence generating sixteen thousand convictions a year.

And the crop mix shifted. African growers had dominated grain production in the colony's early decades and had been driven out of the market by the legislation described in Module 6; what the marketing system rewarded, when it rewarded anything, was maize, and the small grains — the drought crops, the ones that carry a household through a failed season — declined as a marketed crop even as they remained the thing people actually ate when the maize failed.

Every one of those decisions was taken for its own reasons, by different departments, in different decades. Together they produced a population which had doubled, on land which had not, without cattle, without the option of moving, and growing a crop that fails in a drought year.

That is a metabolic debt. It was not inherited. It was constructed.

And then the bill was presented to the debtor

What happened next is the part of the record that repays the closest reading, because the state watched the crisis develop, described it accurately, and drew from it the conclusion that Africans farmed badly.

From the late 1920s the administration began reordering the reserves to arrest what it saw as an impending ecological disaster and to increase their carrying capacity. Emory Alvord, the American agricultural missionary appointed Agriculturist for the Instruction of Natives in 1927, drove a programme of "centralisation" — reorganising each reserve into separated arable and grazing blocks with a village line between them — beginning at Shurugwi in the 1930s and extended thereafter. The Natural Resources Act of 1941 gave conservation the force of law. The Native Land Husbandry Act of 1951 completed the sequence with individual tenure, acreage limits and enforced destocking.

The governing premise of the whole programme is stated in the scholarship in a single clause and it should be quoted for what it assumes: that African reserves had to finance their own progress and sustain themselves within the demarcated boundaries.

Within the demarcated boundaries. The boundaries were the problem, and they were the one variable the programme was forbidden to touch.

By 1954 the Natural Resources Board had reached something close to alarm, reporting — in the words that survive — that the time for plain speaking had arrived and that it was no exaggeration to say the colony was heading for disaster. It was describing soil erosion in the reserves. It was not describing forty-nine million acres of European Area, much of which was unworked and some of which was held by syndicates that had never farmed it.

And here the record produces its sharpest single item. In 1927, in the government's own *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal*, an official named Jennings argued that soil erosion in Southern Rhodesia was caused by settler agriculture and not by African agriculture — because settlers practised clean cultivation and ploughed deep and up and down the slope, whereas African cultivation retained stumps, left fields weedy, cultivated shallow, and fallowed regularly.

That was published in 1927, by the state, in the state's own agricultural journal, before centralisation began. Twenty-four years later the state passed an Act, on the ground that African farming was destroying the land, which took the cattle, capped the acreage, and disqualified the migrant — and thereby, as Module 5 recorded, handed the nationalist movement the grievance that recruited a countryside.

The sequence deserves to be set out because it is the module's central finding. The order made the reserves too small. The reserves degraded, as they were bound to. The degradation was cited as evidence that Africans could not farm. The remedy imposed on that evidence was the single policy that broke the arrangement's hold on the rural population. **The order manufactured the crisis, misdiagnosed it, and then destroyed itself with the cure.**

The sword column

Set beside all this, the direct violence is small — and its smallness is the second thing this module has to explain.

The conquest of 1893 killed on the order of three to four thousand Ndebele in two set-piece battles, against four white dead at the Shangani and a patrol of thirty-four at the river. The risings of 1896–97 killed 372 settlers and, on David Beach's careful estimate, somewhere between five and ten thousand Africans. Between then and 1972 there is no episode of mass killing in this country at all: no punitive column of the Algerian kind, no rubber terror, no famine with a name. There are sixteen thousand convictions a year, and men dying in mine compounds of silicosis and tuberculosis and being discharged to walk home, and a great deal of flogging, and the ordinary attritional cruelty of the pass

and the tax. Then the bush war of 1972–79, at somewhere between twenty and thirty-odd thousand dead depending on whose count is used.

Add the identifiable dead across ninety years and the total is somewhere in the range of thirty to forty-five thousand people. For a conquest that lasted from 1890 to 1980 and held between one and seven million people, that is a low figure. Algeria's is an order of magnitude higher; the Congo's cannot be stated at all.

The temptation is to conclude that this was therefore a mild order. The conclusion is false, and the reason it is false is the whole point of putting the two columns side by side. What this order did instead of killing people was to compress them — onto a fifth of the land, at doubling density, without cattle or mobility or a drought crop, for two generations — and the cost of that appears in no column anywhere, because nobody counted it and there is no event to attach it to.

The column that cannot be filled

Which brings the accounting to its honest end.

There are no reliable African vital statistics for most of this period. The censuses of the African population before the 1960s are estimates, sometimes crude ones; infant mortality was not systematically recorded; cause of death in the reserves was not registered. Claims circulate about Rhodesian infant mortality rates and about malnutrition prevalence, and some of them are probably close to right, but they are not verifiable from the colonial record and this study will not repeat them as findings.

What can be said is what the administration itself said. By the early 1950s farms and industries were reporting increasing malnutrition and poor physical health among African workers, and the state and the employers were reluctant to acknowledge the problem, because acknowledging it would have meant paying either for a decent diet or for wages that could buy one. That is not a statistic. It is an administrative posture, and it is documented.

And the geography of the original allocation returned, on schedule, sixty years later. The Gwaai and Shangani reserves assigned to the Ndebele in 1894 — five-sixths of Gwaai without surface water for nine months of the year, Shangani in the tsetse belt — sat in the driest quarter of the country. In 1964–65 south-western Matabeleland was hit by a drought severe enough to force a change in the colony's whole approach to water administration. The people in its path were there because a commission had put them

there seventy years earlier, having toured the province, interviewed white witnesses, and not looked at the ground.

Reading the accounting against the framework

The inherited-debt model does not apply here, and the reason is diagnostic. Where a conquest destroys a coordinating apparatus that was holding a population above the land's unassisted capacity — a hydraulic bureaucracy, a granary system, a tribute-and-relief network — the die-off follows the conquest closely and is visible as famine. Southern Rhodesia produced no such event, and the absence is not evidence of mildness; it is evidence about what was conquered. An extensive, low-density, mobile agricultural order carries no such debt, because its population is not being held above anything. **Before reading a conquest's demographic cost, establish what kind of system was conquered: the metabolic column is large where the defeated order was doing coordination work, and near-empty where it was not.**

The settler variant does not call in a debt. It writes one. This is the module's contribution and it inverts the standard picture. Where the conqueror wants the ground rather than the surplus, he does not destroy the coordination — there is little to destroy — he encloses the space. And space was the entire safety margin of the system he found. The arithmetic of Southern Rhodesia between 1930 and 1952 is the whole mechanism: a population rising from about 937,000 to about 1,970,000 on a reserve area falling from 21,127,040 acres to 20,859,350. Nobody had to change a farming practice for that to become a crisis. The crisis was created by a line on a map and by the passage of time.

The manufactured crisis then supplies the justification for the intervention that ends the order. This is a feedback loop worth naming because it is not obvious in advance. The reserves degrade because they are too small. The degradation is real and is measured accurately by the state's own scientists. It is then attributed to African farming practice — despite the state's own agricultural journal having concluded the opposite in 1927 — because attributing it to the reserve boundary would require moving the boundary, and the boundary is the arrangement. The remedy is therefore imposed on the victims: centralisation, the Natural Resources Act, compulsory destocking, and finally the Native Land Husbandry Act, which took the last residual and turned a countryside that had absorbed sixty years of pressure into a recruiting ground inside six. **An order that forbids itself the true diagnosis will keep**

prescribing, and the prescriptions will get heavier, and one of them will be the one that kills it.

And the grimmest thing in the accounting is that it has no line items. A conquest that kills forty thousand people in identifiable episodes across ninety years leaves an archive of those episodes: battles with names, risings with dates, a war with a casualty return. A conquest that instead compresses two million people onto shrinking ground leaves nothing an accountant can enter. There is no famine to name, no massacre to commemorate, no number to argue about. The cost is real, it is probably larger than the sword column, and it is distributed across sixty years of slightly worse harvests, slightly smaller herds, slightly shorter lives and children who were slightly too thin — none of which was recorded, because the people who kept the records had no reason to count it and the people who bore it had no way to.

That is what a settler order's grim accounting looks like: not an atrocity, but an arithmetic, run slowly, on people who were never told the sum.

A note on sources.

The exact words quoted here are few and are flagged. The Natural Resources Board's statement of 1954 — that the time for plain speaking had arrived and that it was no exaggeration to say the colony was heading for disaster — is quoted as reproduced through Ian Phimister in the recent scholarship on land policy in Sanyati; the quotation is truncated in the source consulted and is given here only to the extent reproduced. The native commissioner's 1930 assessment of the Shurugwi reserve, and his prediction of an exodus following the Land Apportionment Act, are quoted as reproduced in the scholarship on early centralisation efforts, drawing on the Native Trade and Production Commission evidence and the National Archives of Zimbabwe files cited there. The premise that African reserves had to finance their own progress and sustain themselves within the demarcated boundaries is quoted from the recent article on land-use policy in Seke Reserve. Jennings's 1927 argument in the *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* (vol. XXIV, pp. 328–30) that soil erosion was caused by settler and not African cultivation practice is paraphrased from its citation in the work on conservation in Shurugwi; the original journal has not been consulted here, and anyone wishing to quote Jennings directly should go to it.

Figures are given as the sources give them and the most load-bearing pair deserves scrutiny. The reserve acreages — 21,127,040 in 1930 and 20,859,350 in 1952 — and the African population figures of 937,000 in 1931 and 1,970,000 in 1951 are taken together from a single citation of Floyd (1962) in the African economic history working-paper literature, drawing on Chief Native Commissioner's annual reports in the Public Record Office. They are the arithmetic on which this module's central claim rests, and they should be re-checked against Floyd and against the census reports before the comparison is used elsewhere; colonial counts of the African population in particular are estimates and the 1931 figure is likely to be the weaker of the two, which if anything understates the ratio. Rinderpest mortality of eighty to ninety per cent of cattle in 1896 is as given in Module 1. The

casualty estimates for 1893, for 1896–97 and for the bush war are as sourced in Modules 1 and 10, with the same cautions.

Modern scholarship is paraphrased and credited throughout: the literature on centralisation and Emory Alvord's programme; JoAnn McGregor on conservation and ecological change in Shurugwi; the recent work on Seke Reserve and on the Sanyati resettlements; the studies of livestock management, destocking and veterinary policy; and the work on small grains and African nutrition, from which the account of the 1950s malnutrition reports and of the state's and employers' reluctance to act is drawn. Ian Phimister's economic and social history stands behind much of the underlying picture.

Three cautions, and the first is the largest. This module argues from an absence — the absence of a famine, of an epidemic mortality event, of a demographic collapse — to a positive claim about a slow distributed cost. That inference is reasonable and it is not proof. It is possible that the compression of the reserves was less costly in lives than this module supposes, and the colonial record cannot settle it either way, because the record was not designed to. Second, the claim that the pre-conquest orders carried no metabolic debt rests on the archaeological and historical picture of extensive low-density agriculture given in the landscape module, and there is a live scholarly discussion about population densities and agricultural intensity on the plateau, particularly around Great Zimbabwe at its height, which this study does not enter. Third, figures for African infant mortality and malnutrition prevalence in colonial Rhodesia circulate widely, including some very high infant mortality rates, and none of them is used here, because none could be traced to a colonial statistical series that existed. That gap is itself reported as a finding rather than filled.

THE SAME STATUTE BOOK

Convergence and divergence — what this case shares with the others, the fork that produces everything it does not share, and the strongest case that can be made for the defence, with the arithmetic beside it

A case study in the Patterns of Power series · Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic) · held as tested, not revealed

What this case shares

Set the twelve modules against the other studies in this collection and the shared machinery is not in doubt.

A legal instrument stands at the origin, and its precise wording is load-bearing: a mineral concession obtained at Bulawayo in October 1888 by men who made oral promises they did not write down, converted into a royal charter in October 1889 whose recitals put the improvement of the natives first and the immigration of Europeans fourth. The floor of force is laid by an armed expedition and paid for out of the conquered's property. The legitimating story is addressed to the metropole and to the settlers and never to the conquered. The seam between what is said in London and what is done on the plateau is not held by a censor. Extraction is sorted by caste and written into statute. Formation is withheld from the majority and produces, in spite of the withholding, precisely the stratum that eventually takes the country. And the order ends by fracture at the top rather than by the ruled beating the floor.

Every one of those appears in Buganda, in Vietnam, in Senegal, in Northern Nigeria, in Iraq. The vocabulary changes and the machinery does not.

Where it genuinely differs

The differences are real and must not be flattened, because a reader who sees one flattened will reasonably discard the comparison entirely. There are six, and they are consequential.

The extraction ran sideways rather than outward. In the non-settler cases the wealth moves from the colony to the metropole and the local intermediaries take a commission.

Here the chartered company that conquered the country ran at a net loss for the thirty-three years it governed and paid no dividend until June 1924, after its charter had ended. The transfer that mattered ran a few hundred miles, from African producers to European producers, through Acts passed in Salisbury by a parliament elected on a settler franchise. The metropole was, in cash terms, close to a bystander.

No native administrative elite was formed, and the refusal was written down. Buganda and Northern Nigeria produced literate salaried strata out of the chiefly families because the protectorate could not staff itself otherwise. Southern Rhodesia considered the proposition and rejected it in a sentence in 1920: the policy of raising the mass ever so little was preferred to any scheme for the advancement of the few.

The metabolic column is nearly empty and the compression column is large. Where a conquest breaks a coordinating apparatus that was holding a population above the land's unassisted capacity, the die-off follows the conquest. Nothing of the kind happened here, because the orders conquered were extensive, mobile and low-density. What the colonial order did instead was fix a boundary around them and let time run: African population from about 937,000 in 1931 to about 1,970,000 in 1951, on reserve acreage that fell from 21,127,040 to 20,859,350.

The censor arrived late, and faced inward at the settlers. For seventy-five years there was no apparatus of concealment pointed at Britain, because Britain was told everything and declined to act. The first newspaper suppressed in the country was the African one, in 1964. The censorship of the settlers' own English-language press began in October 1965, a month before the settlers repudiated the Crown, and by then there was no metropole left in the loop.

Liberty inside the arrangement was real and substantial. Responsible government from 1923, a parliament that removed three Prime Ministers in six years, an independent judiciary whose Chief Justice resigned in public rather than administer a statute, a privately owned press hostile enough to require censoring, referendums, trade unions with bargaining power. Saigon under the French had nothing comparable; Virginia in 1770 did.

And the collapse required a fracture in a third order. The event that made the Rhodesian position unholdable was a coup by junior officers in Lisbon on 25 April 1974, made for Portuguese reasons, whose consequence was an independent Mozambique, a closed border and a thousand kilometres of sanctuary.

The fork that produces most of them

Five of those six divergences come out of one variable, and it is worth stating cleanly because it travels.

Does the conqueror want the ground, or the surplus produced on it?

If the surplus: the people are the asset. They must be left in place, working, and enough of them must be formed to run the machinery — clerks, interpreters, chiefs' sons. Coercion is a start-up cost that amortises as the apparatus takes over. The wealth flows outward to the metropole, because the metropole is where the buyers are. And the intermediary class formed to administer becomes both the order's durable partner and, in time, its most dangerous critic.

If the ground: the people are an obstacle. Nobody needs to be formed, because the settlers' own children will hold the posts, and forming natives for them would manufacture competitors for the electorate. Coercion is not a start-up cost but an operating cost, because it *is* the labour supply — a funnel, not a wall, which cannot be relaxed without the labour going home. The wealth flows sideways, to the settler, because the settler is who the legislature belongs to. And the order acquires a second elite with land, arms and votes, which is where it will eventually break.

Southern Rhodesia sits at the ground end and Vietnam at the surplus end, and almost everything else follows. The precision matters: these are not two moral categories but two answers to a question about what is being taken, and each produces its own characteristic cruelty. A labour colony works people to death and needs them alive; a land colony does not need them at all and pushes them onto ground that will not carry them. Neither is the other.

The strongest case for the defence

It should be stated in its own voice and at its full strength, because it is the strongest such case in this collection, and because a reader who suspects it has been shaved is entitled to stop reading.

First: something was built, and somebody built it. In 1890 the territory between the Limpopo and the Zambezi had no road, no rail, no wheel in general use, no written form of its own languages, no hospital, no formal school, no bank, no permanent town and no currency. By 1965 it had a rail network reaching four borders, a national road system, the Kariba dam and one of the largest hydro-electric schemes in Africa, a university, referral hospitals, a manufacturing sector producing everything from textiles

to steel, a commercial agriculture that fed the region, and a currency that traded above the pound. That was not conjured. It was surveyed, financed, engineered and maintained by people who came out and did it, many of whom died of blackwater fever doing it, and it did not exist before they came.

Second: the population multiplied. Whatever estimate is used for 1890 — and the honest answer is that nobody knows — the African population of the territory in 1980 was something over seven million. Smallpox was suppressed, rinderpest controlled, sleeping sickness pushed back, and the famines that had periodically emptied districts did not recur on the old scale. An order accused of extraction presided over a population increase measured in multiples. Extraction that leaves ten people where it found one is a peculiar kind of extraction.

Third: compare what came after. Independent Zimbabwe conducted, between 1983 and 1987, a campaign in Matabeleland and the Midlands whose death toll is contested — the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace confirmed a minimum of 2,750 and thought the figure might reach 8,000; the International Association of Genocide Scholars puts it above 20,000 — and which was ended not by accountability but by absorbing the opposition party into the ruling one. Political pluralism was extinguished within seven years of independence. From 2000 the commercial agriculture was destroyed; inflation reached figures that stopped being measurable; crude death rates in Harare and Bulawayo rose three- to fivefold by the early 2000s; and several million people left the country. The Rhodesian who says *count our column and then count theirs* is not making a rhetorical point. He is asking for the same arithmetic to be applied twice.

Fourth: they were not wrong about the succession. The settler argument in the 1960s was not principally that Africans were incapable. It was that majority rule in a country with no tradition of constitutional opposition would produce one election and then one party. Robert Mugabe held office for thirty-seven years and left it in a military coup. That prediction was, as a matter of record, correct.

Fifth, and this is the argument the framework has to answer: there was no innocent order to displace. The Ndebele state the Company destroyed was two generations old, built by a Khumalo splinter that had broken from Shaka, and it had the conquered local population at the bottom of it under a name — *hole* — that everybody used. The Rozvi it displaced were a conquest. The builders of Great Zimbabwe had conquered somebody. So had the Normans in England, whose descendants sat in the House of Lords in 1926 and reached, when they wanted a precedent for how a conqueror should treat existing tenure, for William the Conqueror. The standard being applied to the

settlers — that taking a country by force voids the taker's claim — has never been applied to any of the conquests before them, and was not applied to the one that followed them. If conquest is the disqualifying fact, then every order in this collection is disqualified, and so is the government that sits in Harare.

The arithmetic

Each of those five has a set of figures beside it, and the figures are already in the twelve modules.

On what was built. It was built, and the record shows who financed it. In 1903–4 the colony's total revenue was about £435,000, of which nearly £130,000 came from Africans through direct taxes and customs — roughly a third of the state's income, from a population with no vote, two industrial schools and no claim on any of the services the money bought. Through the 1930s and 1940s African maize growers received a price averaging twenty to thirty per cent below the supported price paid to European growers for the identical bag, and a levy of threepence a head on cattle sold by Africans, from which Europeans were exempt. Wages of fourteen shillings a month on the farms in 1932 and around twenty on the mines in 1935 were held in place by a statute defining an African out of the word "employee." The infrastructure and the arithmetic of who paid for it are both on the page, and neither cancels the other.

On the population. It multiplied, and the ground available to it did not. That is the arithmetic of Module 11 and it is the same population in both statements: from about 937,000 to about 1,970,000 in twenty years, on reserve acreage that fell slightly. The state measured the consequence accurately — the Natural Resources Board reported in 1954 that the time for plain speaking had arrived and the colony was heading for disaster — and attributed it to African farming practice, twenty-seven years after its own agricultural journal had concluded that the erosion was caused by settler cultivation and not by African.

On what came after. The comparison is legitimate and this study will not dodge it. Two things can be set beside it. The first is the Gukurahundi's own range, which is genuinely disputed between about 2,750 confirmed and above 20,000, and which sits inside the same order of magnitude as the entire identified death toll of the ninety colonial years. The second is a matter of statute. The Law and Order (Maintenance) Act — the Act that caused the Federal Chief Justice to resign in 1960 saying it removed any lingering doubt whether the country could be called a police state — was not repealed at independence. It remained on the Zimbabwean statute book for twenty-two years,

and was repealed in January 2002 only by the Public Order and Security Act, which lawyers and human rights organisations at the time said was more restrictive than the instrument it replaced, and whose main provisions were carried forward again in 2019.

The detention powers, the emergency powers, the public-order machinery, the land settlement and the administrative structure of the reserves were handed over intact and in working order. What the successor government did with them, it did with them.

On the succession prediction. It was correct, and it is worth being exact about what it predicted and what it was offered as a reason for. It was offered as a reason for not extending the franchise. The record of the extensions actually proposed is in Module 8: Garfield Todd's, which would have added six to ten thousand Africans to a roll of about fifty thousand, and which cost him his cabinet in three weeks and his party in three months. The proposition that a wider franchise would end in one-party rule was advanced against a proposal that would have left the electorate eighty-four per cent white.

On the recursion. The framework does not answer this argument by rejecting it. It accepts it, and has accepted it since the landscape module, where the Ndebele state is described as a conquest two generations old with a named caste of the conquered beneath it, the Rozvi as a conquest before that, and the English themselves as a conquered people whose lords hold titles from 1066. There is no innocent baseline anywhere in this collection, and none is looked for.

What follows from accepting it is that the question changes rather than closes. If every order began in force, then *was this a conquest* is not a question worth asking, because the answer is always yes. The questions that remain are the ones the twelve modules asked: what did it cost, who paid, who was told what and by whom, who was allowed to become what, and how did it end. Those questions can be asked of the Company in 1893, of Lobengula in 1870, of the Rozvi in 1684, of the Normans in 1066 and of the government in Harare in 1983, and the framework asks them of all of them on the same terms. It is a method for reading orders, not a licence for one of them.

Reading the whole against the framework

Twelve modules, and the revisions they returned. They are set out here so that they can be used, and broken, elsewhere.

The Menu of options open to a conqueror is gated by a question that comes before it: not *what apex did he find* but *what did he come for*. Where the object is ground rather

than surplus, the cheap options are foreclosed regardless of what apex is available, because you cannot rule through a chief whose people you intend to move off the land his authority is.

A conqueror who cannot afford his army does not become less violent. He converts a salaried force into an unsalaried one by paying men in the property of people not yet conquered, which removes the chain of command, gives the men under arms a financial interest in further conquest, and makes total dispossession the only way the wage bill can be discharged. The enlistment agreement of 14 August 1893 is that mechanism in a legal instrument, with a quitrent attached.

The most durable settlement fiction is not a claim of racial right but a claim of universal right. A clause admitting any native to buy land on the same terms as anyone else, left in force for thirty-two years, produced thirty-one million acres against forty-five thousand — and produced it in a form that could be described in Parliament as the natives not having availed themselves of the provision. Where such a fiction exists, the date to watch for is the year the excluded begin to qualify, because that is the year it is repealed, and the reason given will be their protection.

The seam between metropole and colony is not held by concealment. It is held by sequence: an accusation becomes admissible only after the machinery it describes has been built, staffed and defended in public, and a formal safeguard will be invoked, examined and declined in writing. What a regime does buy censorship for is whichever population's consent it currently runs on — which is why there was none pointed at Britain for seventy-five years, and a full apparatus pointed at the settlers within weeks of the settlers becoming the only audience that mattered.

Whether a native administrative elite is formed is not a question of colonial doctrine. It is a question of whether there are settlers who need the jobs. And withholding formation is only half the mechanism: the other half is the statute that removes the destination, so that education leads nowhere and the argument for more schools becomes moot.

Coercion in a land colony is a funnel rather than a wall, which is why it can never be reduced: relax the tax and the labour stays home. And the ruled will absorb very large costs indefinitely provided one residual is untouched. The danger point is not the highest absolute burden but the removal of the last thing that made the burden survivable, which here was dated 1951 and named by the man who benefited from it in eight words.

Extraction in a settler colony runs sideways rather than outward, and its most efficient instrument is a marketing board rather than a tax, because nothing is confiscated at any identifiable moment.

Alignment among the powerful is not agreement. It is the coincidence of separate self-defences, and its signature is that leaders are removed in one direction only. Liberty is the residue those quarrels leave behind, which means it is held on a contingency: unify the elite and the freedoms will be surrendered by the people who own them, fast, and by their own parliament.

An order ends by fracture at the top, and the fracture need not be in its own order. Rhodesia's actuarial position in 1973 was a function of the political stability of a dictatorship in Portugal, and nobody in Salisbury had that on the balance sheet.

And a settler conquest does not call in a metabolic debt. It writes one, by fixing a boundary around a system whose entire safety margin was space, and then reads the result as evidence about the people inside the boundary.

Those are the findings. The arithmetic they rest on is in the twelve modules and in the sources notes attached to each, with the gaps marked where the record has gaps. What the sum of it comes to is not in this study, and was never going to be, because the reader is standing somewhere the author is not.

A note on sources.

This module quotes nothing that has not been quoted and sourced in the preceding eleven, with two exceptions, and every figure it uses carries forward the caution attached to it where it first appeared. Readers wanting the provenance of the charter recitals, the Rudd Concession's oral promises, Knutsford's despatches, the enlistment terms of 14 August 1893, Keigwin's 1920 formula, Clause 14 of the 1961 Declaration of Rights, the Natural Resources Board of 1954, the 1927 *Rhodesia Agricultural Journal* argument, the reserve acreages and population figures, the 1903–4 revenue split, the maize price differential, the cattle levy, the wage figures, the pass-law conviction counts, the war casualty ranges, or the Foreign Office and Kissinger material on the settlement should go to Modules 1 to 11, where each is set out with its limits.

The two exceptions are these. The Gukurahundi death toll is given as a contested range: the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe confirmed a minimum of 2,750 and considered that the figure might reach 8,000, while the International Association of Genocide Scholars' consensus is above 20,000, and published estimates span roughly 2,000 to 30,000. No single figure is asserted here, for the same reason that no single Congo figure is asserted in the framework paper on information: the spread is wide enough that choosing a number would be an argument rather than a finding. The statutory history is verified: the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act [Chapter 11:07] was repealed by the Public Order and Security Act [Chapter 11:17], which commenced on 21 January 2002; POSA was itself repealed and replaced by the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act with effect from 15

November 2019, with its principal provisions retained. The characterisation of POSA as more restrictive than LOMA is attributed to the lawyers and human rights organisations who made it at the time and is not this study's assessment.

Two figures in the case for the defence are given loosely and should be treated as such. The African population of the territory in 1890 is not known and no estimate is offered; the 1980 figure of something over seven million follows the standard demographic series. The description of the physical infrastructure existing in 1965 is a summary of the general record rather than a sourced inventory, and a reader who wants it precisely should go to the colony's own statistical yearbooks, with the ordinary caution that they were compiled by the administration whose achievements they record. The mortality data for Harare and Bulawayo in the early 2000s is from the published study of adult mortality in those cities, which attributes the great majority of the increase in the 15–44 age group to tuberculosis and HIV — a qualification that belongs beside the figure wherever it is used.

Finally, a note about this module's own construction. The case for the defence set out above is stated in the strongest form this study could give it, and it is not a straw figure; every one of its five arguments is made in the published literature by serious people and the fifth is conceded by this framework in full. The arithmetic set beside it is not offered as a refutation, and the two sections are deliberately not resolved into a verdict. That is the collection's method rather than an evasion of it, and the reasoning behind it is set out in the companion addendum on the reader's position.

PATTERNS OF POWER

British Southern Rhodesia · The Complete Study

A landscape opening and twelve modules, with front matter.

Thomas J. Bryan with Claude (Anthropic).

Primary sources quoted exactly and verified; modern scholarship paraphrased and credited; contested figures given as ranges.

Part of the collection Patterns of Power.
Tested, never revealed.